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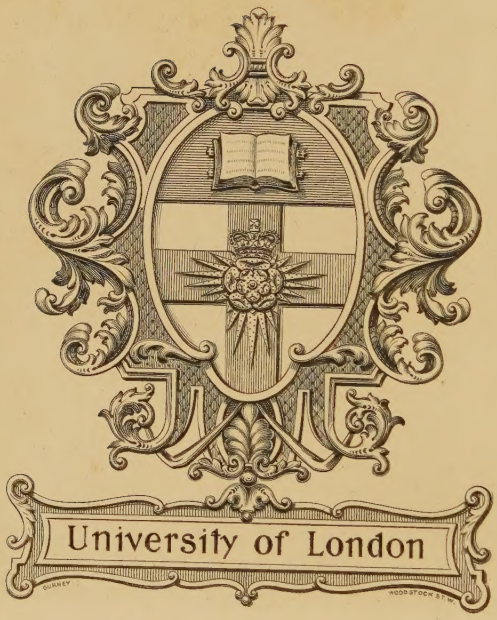

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Chronology of Hansard's Debates.

The PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal: Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

IN THE

Fourth Session OF THE *Twenty-Fourth Parliament* OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *Great Britain* AND *Ireland*, APPOINTED TO MEET 5 AUGUST, 1886, IN THE FIFTIETH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

No. 1.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MAY 22.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 14th May, 1889.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, That the Committee have added the Lord Elgin (E. Elgin and Kincardine) to the Standing Committee for General Bills for the consideration of the Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act (1883) Amendment Bill. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend and consolidate the Acts relating to Industrial Schools in Great Britain —Was presented by the Earl Brownlow; read 1ª; and to printed. (No. 62.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.
LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LEAKE) BILL (NO. 63).

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to enable the School Board for Leake to put in force the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the Acts amending the same—Was presented by the Lord President: Then it was moved that the Sessional Order of the 5th March last, "That no Bill originating in this House confirming any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate shall be read a first time after Friday, the 10th day of May next," be dispensed with in respect of the said Bill, and that the Bill be now read 1ª; agreed to; Bill read 1ª accordingly; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

SAINT GILES RESTORATION (SCOTLAND) ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 64).

House in Committee (according to order): Amendments made: The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and Bill to be printed as amended.

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL.
(No. 52.)

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; and to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

SCOTLAND (COMMISSIONERS OF SUPPLY).

"Return of the number of Commissioners of Supply in each county in Scotland, stating the number of those who are qualified as being eldest sons or heirs apparent of proprietors; also the number of those who are qualified as factors to act in the absence of their principals; also the number of those who are qualified in virtue of their offices, and giving the names of these offices or appointments: Ordered to be laid before the House."—(*The Earl of Minto.*)

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 14*th May*, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

THE FALKLAND ISLANDS.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether frequent complaints have been received at the Colonial Office from inhabitants of the Falkland Islands with reference to certain specific grievances under which they labour; whether the Governor of these Islands is also the Chief Justice, and is without any legal qualifications, and is often the prosecutor as well as the Judge of accused persons; whether the Colonial Secretary also holds the office of police magistrate, and is without any legal qualifications, and, except in cases in which the persons brought before him are charged with drunkenness, consults with the Governor as to his decisions; whether the offices of coroner and postmaster are also held by the Colonial Secretary; whether all petitions presented to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by aggrieved persons must be sent to the Governor 15 days before the departure of the mail for England; and whether, in view of the fact that grave discontent prevails among the Colonists, who are entirely unrepresented on the Executive or Legislative Councils, the Secretary of State will take any, and, if so, what, steps to investigate their grievances through some independent authority, and to consider their claims for some form of Representative Government?

*The UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de Worms, Liverpool, Toxteth): In answer to the hon. Member, I have to state that occasional, but not frequent, complaints of alleged grievances are received from the Falkland Islands, as from other Colonies. The Governor is also the Chief Justice. He has had considerable experience in legal matters, having held for 20 years judicial and magisterial offices in the Colony of Barbados. He is not the prosecutor of accused persons. The Colonial Secretary is also police magistrate, coroner, and postmaster; he has had no legal training. He would probably consult with the Governor as to his decisions in cases of special difficulty. As regards the 5th paragraph of the question, the Secretary of State is not aware of any such direction, but it would be in accordance with the Colonial Regulations. As the Governor is required to report on all petitions which he transmits to the Secretary of State, if petitions were not sent to him in time for him to prepare his Report before the departure of the mail, their transmission would necessarily be delayed until the next following mail. The Secretary of State has no reason to believe that discontent prevails among the Colonists, and he does not propose to take any such steps as are suggested in the concluding words of the question.

Mr. MAC NEILL: I will further ask whether it is the fact that the Governor of the Falkland Islands has written to the Secretary of State for the Colonies a letter requesting the removal of the hon. Samuel Hamilton, Colonial Surgeon, and one of the Members of his Council; if he can state the grounds of this request; whether he will give an assurance that the Colonial Secretary will take no steps in the matter without giving Dr. Hamilton full opportunity of explanation; whether the correspondence in this matter will be laid upon the Table of the House; and whether,

in view of the frequent complaints as to misgovernment and mismanagement in the Falkland Islands, the Government will give an early day for the discussion of the conduct of the Governor?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The Governor of the Falkland Islands has recently expressed dissatisfaction with the conduct of the Colonial Surgeon, especially in his capacity of Member of the Executive and Legislative Councils, but has not requested his removal. No Colonial Officer is ever removed from office without being given an opportunity of defending himself against the charges brought against him. The correspondence being for the most part of a confidential character cannot be laid upon the Table of the House. It is not the fact that there have been frequent complaints as to misgovernment and mismanagement in the Falkland Islands, where the administration of the present Governor has been very satisfactory; and Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to give an early day for the discussion of his conduct.

IRELAND—THE MILITARY AT GWEEDORE AND FALCARRAGH.

MR. MAC NEILL asked the Secretary of State for War whether it is a fact that, on the 15th of May, 1888, a detachment of the King's Royal Rifles were brought from Enniskillen to Dunfanaghy, county Donegal, to quell disturbances arising from disputes between Mr. Wybrant Olphert and the tenantry of Gweedore and Falcarragh; whether the workhouse at Dunfanaghy has been converted into a temporary barrack for these troops; and if so, what rent, if any, has been paid by the Government to the Poor Law Union for this accommodation; whether the said workhouse has been, from the 15th of May, 1888 till the present time, occupied by military; and what has been the average number of soldiers and officers quartered there; whether a detachment of the King's Royal Rifles is now occupying the outhouses attached to Ballyconnell House, Falcarragh, the residence of Mr. Olphert, while their commanding officers are residing in Ballyconnell House; what is the strength of this detachment; and what, if any, is the remuneration given to Mr. Olphert for supplying them with accommodation; and, is it usual for the forces of the Crown, called upon to preserve the peace in a dispute between a landlord and his tenant, to be billeted in the house of the landlord.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): In consequence of the disturbed state of Dunfanaghy, county Donegal, a detachment of about 100 men was moved to Dunfanaghy in January, 1888, and since that date has occupied the workhouse there. No rent is to be paid for this occupation, but any damages are to be made good. Two officers and about 50 men of the King's Royal Rifles have for some time been quartered in and about Ballyconnell House. The regulated allowance for billeting is paid to Mr. Olphert. Such an occupation of a private house is unusual, and takes place with Mr. Olphert's concurrence.

MR. MAC NEILL: Was the Board for the officers charged?

MR. BRODRICK: Yes; the regulation amount—2s. per day.

MR. MAC NEILL: As to the workhouse at Dunfanaghy, is the hon. Gentleman aware that Mr. Olphert is Chairman of the Board of Guardians, and that he has the whole administration of the Poor Law in his hands?

MR. BRODRICK: I am not aware of that fact.

MR. MAC NEILL: Then I am.

THE WANDSWORTH POLICE COURT.

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that when Mr. Plowden, the magistrate, left the Police Court at Hammersmith on Friday, 10th May, he had to adjourn 29 summonses in order to proceed to the Wandsworth Police Court, which he did not reach until after three o'clock, much to the inconvenience of the witnesses and barristers who were interested in cases; whether his attention has been called to the statement of Mr. Plowden that "it was a pressing public grievance, and he feared that unless some remedy were found the state of things was likely to continue"; and, what changes are proposed so that justice may be properly administered?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): The fact stated in the first paragraph is, I believe,

substantially accurate. I have seen in the newspapers the observations attributed to Mr. Plowden. When Hammersmith and Wandsworth were made full day Courts last year, a scheme was arranged, with the concurrence of the Chief Magistrate, for working those Courts with three magistrates instead of four, thereby giving four days' work a week instead of three, with an extra day a week during the vacation to one of their colleagues. Unfortunately, since this scheme has been under trial there has been a great deal of illness among the Metropolitan Magistrates. Five have been on sick leave, of whom two belong to the Hammersmith and Wandsworth group. This has undoubtedly entailed considerable extra work on Mr. Plowden. I have it under consideration whether, by any better re-arrangement of the Courts or of the Magisterial Staff, the recurrence of similar inconvenience to the magistrates and to the public can be prevented; but it is obvious that no scheme can entirely prevent embarrassment in the event of unusual sickness.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): On the same question, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the magistrate who is absent on sick leave handed in a medical certificate?

MR. MATTHEWS: I presume that a certificate would be handed to the Chief Magistrate.

THE PILOTAGE COMMITTEE.

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN asked the President of the Board of Trade, when he intends to introduce, as promised, the Bill carrying out the recommendations of the Pilotage Committee of last Session; and what is the reason of the delay?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I have been considering the observations of those interested in this question on the Draft Bill that was circulated to them, and I hope to introduce a Bill on Monday next.

IRELAND—INCITEMENT TO ATTACK THE POLICE.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland if he has had his attention called the Tipperary *Nationalist* of 8th May, and has seen an article therein, headed "Bobbies, beware!" which contains the following extract:—

"In a moment a few miserable bludgeoners, with the look of Mitchelstown murderers in their faces, pounced on the helpless cripple, and, dragging him from where he was, dashed the poor fellow headlong against the wall. . . . It was enough to set one on to the perpetration of an act of madness or a wild and thoughtless deed of revenge. John O'Connor saw it too, and, failing to burst open the door of the carriage in which he was held by his escort, cried out 'Cowards!' . . . We are watching you, and I tell you we will be your masters yet. . . . Ah! had we arms in our hands as they had . . . would they be so ready to charge on our lines. . . . We are not, of course, in a position just now to enter into a contest, a physical contest, with Balfour's pups. . . . Our day, however, is coming, thank God, and it is coming fast. . . . Bobbies, beware!"

And, whether such incitement to attack the police can be dealt with under the present law?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): I am informed that the matters referred to in the article quoted in the question, as well as the article itself, are at the present moment under the consideration of the Attorney General for Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Did the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston) give the hon. Member for South Tipperary (Mr. J. O'Connor) any opportunity whatever before putting this question behind his back of questioning the accuracy or inaccuracy of the quotation?

MR. JOHNSTON: I took the information from the Tipperary *Nationalist*, which is the organ of the National League.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Has the hon. Gentleman put the question by arrangement with the Government?

MR. JOHNSTON: Certainly not.

VOLUNTEER COLONELS.

MR. MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Secretary of State for War whether, it being requisite in recommending an officer of Volunteers for promotion, who thereby supersedes others, that those officers are willing to be superseded, it is allowable for colonels commanding corps, over 60 years of age, to procure an extension of command for seven years without the knowledge or concurrence of the officers

in the corps whose promotion is thereby stopped ?

MR. BRODRICK: A Volunteer officer's command can only be extended on the recommendation of the General commanding the district, who is responsible that the extension is made solely in the interests of the Service.

FORESHORES OF THURSO.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether the Government intend to take any steps to vindicate the rights of the Crown to the foreshores, &c., of Thurso, which are claimed by J. S. T. Sinclair in an action for declarator raised by him against the Town Council of Thurso ?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: In reply the hon. Member's question, I have to state that the legal adviser of the Board of Trade in Edinburgh has been instructed to take the requisite steps for protecting the rights of the Crown.

IRELAND—OFFICE OF CHIEF RECEIVER.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether, before the Vote for the newly created office of Chief Receiver comes on, Papers on the subject will be laid before Parliament explaining how the abolished office of Receiving Master has been revived under another name ?

MR. MADDEN: I am instituting an inquiry for the purpose of making a selection of the Papers. If the hon. Member will put down the question for Monday I will answer him then. At the same time, I cannot admit that this is an abolished office revived under another name.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I will repeat the question on Monday.

INSPECTOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE FACTORIES.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for War if it is a fact that the Inspector General of Ordnance Factories has been superseded by Colonel Barlow ?

MR. BRODRICK: Major-General Maitland has resigned his appointment as Director-General of the Ordnance Factories, and Colonel Barlow has been appointed to act temporarily, pending the appointment of a successor.

IRELAND—TREATMENT OF MR. J. O'CONNOR, M.P.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland if he has any information as to the health and treatment of the hon. Member for South Tipperary in Tullamore Goal, and is he aware that Dr. Moorhead, J.P., one of the Visiting Justices, has reported that the hon. Member is confined in a flagged cell, and is suffering from rheumatism; and, whether he will direct the Irish Prison Board to inquire into the matter ?

MR. MADDEN: A report has been called for, but it has not yet been received.

AFFAIRS AT OLD CALABAR.

MR. CALDWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is the case that Creek Town, in Old Calabar, is under British protection; whether his attention has been called to the fact that, on or about 24th and 25th February last, a messenger from Creek Town factory was sent to King Eyo, requesting him to call at the factory, as some white visitors wished to see him; that the King went, and there met a German officer, who told him that he must get some Rumby men who had been taken prisoners, otherwise that he, the King, would be taken and kept a prisoner until they were produced; that, although the King stated that he had only heard of the matter from hearsay, and pleaded for time to get the men, as they were not in town, he was taken on board a German gunboat and detained until six o'clock next morning, by which time the Rumby men were brought from Ikoneto and handed over to the Germans, who promised to return the Calabar men for whose return the Rumby men were held as hostages; that two Efik traders who had carried off the Rumby men were also prisoners on board, and the King was told that they would be released when a fine was paid; and that although the King objected to this, he nevertheless sent the fine to Duke Town next day, but the gunboat had left with the Efik traders on board; whether Her Majesty's Government have received any information regarding these Efik traders; whether the proceedings of the Germans within a British Protectorate

were legal; and what steps Her Majesty's Government intend taking in the matter?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): I can only repeat what I said last week—that Consul Hewett reported by the last mail that he was on the point of starting for Old Calabar, to inquire into the facts of the case in question, and that till his Official Report is received, no opinion can be pronounced upon it.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) The right hon. Gentleman answered a question of mine on the same subject some days ago in almost exactly the same terms. Have Her Majesty's Government made no representation to Berlin or endeavoured to elicit full particulars from the German Government, inasmuch as full particulars are known in Liverpool, Glasgow, and other towns?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The House will see that if we adopted this suggestion we should be beginning at the wrong end. We must have a clear statement from our own responsible officers before making representations in a foreign country.

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES.

MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars) asked the Postmaster General how many telegraphic addresses are now registered at the Post Office; how much the fees amount to per annum; and the estimated cost to the Post Office of keeping the registers?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): There are at the present time about 35,000 telegraphic addresses registered at the Post Office, and the fees amount to about £37,000 per annum. It is impossible at such short notice to give an estimate of the cost of keeping the registers, and such information, if furnished, would be, I think, of little use. The cost of keeping the registers forms only a portion of the expense to which the Post Office is put in connection with registered addresses. In the case of messages with such addresses references have to be made to the registers before the messages can be delivered; and these references cost more than the mere "keeping" of the registers.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether our self-governing Colonies are severally bound by the Sugar Convention, in the same manner as the Government of Great Britain, for a minimum period of two years from the time of the operation of the Convention; whether, in the case of any such Colony adopting arrangements for fiscal purposes or for the promotion of the domestic growth of sugar, which might be pronounced by a majority of Foreign Powers on the International Commission (contrary to the judgment of the British Government) to partake of the character of a bounty or of a Differential Duty, Her Majesty's Government would be compelled to prohibit the import of the produce of our own Colonies, under Articles IV. and VII.; whether under Article IV. the Colonies of Great Britain, but of no other country, are disabled from imposing a higher duty upon beetroot than upon cane sugar, and for what reason this Article was agreed to on 16th August (Commercial Papers, No. 13, page 410), when a similar proposal was refused by the President of the Congress on 9th May (Ibid. page 386), on the ground that—

> "The British Government could not dictate terms to the self-governing Colonies, and that they could not permit the discussion of a proposal involving the freedom in Customs matters of the British Empire only of all the contracting countries."

At what date the consent of the Colonies was obtained to the original draft of the Convention submitted to them, and whether they were in any way consulted as to the material alterations introduced into the final Convention before it was signed; and, whether their assent has been specifically sought and obtained to the Convention in its present form.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: The answer to the first question is yes, assuming the self-governing Colonies to have assented to the final Convention, which, as I have stated in reply to two previous questions, we have no reason to doubt. The second question is purely hypothetical, and, as the contingency contemplated by the right hon. Member, could only have to be considered at the earliest two years after the execution of the Treaty—viz., in September, 1893, I do not feel

called upon to state what could only be a mere personal expression of opinion. Taken in connection with my reply to paragraph 1 of the right hon. Member's question, the answer to the third paragraph is that the Colonies becoming parties to the Convention voluntarily, and not at the dictation of Her Majesty's Government, would be bound under Article IV. in the same way as the mother country, not to impose Differential Duties on beet sugar. This is quite consistent with my reply to the German delegate at the sitting of the Conference of the 9th May last year, of which the right hon. Gentleman has omitted a very important portion. In continuation, I said, "The question is not within the competence of the Conference, and cannot be submitted to its judgment. I cannot admit that the maintenance of sugar on the free list of Great Britain can be taken *ad referendum* by the delegate of any Power. The Conference cannot be empowered to legislate on the fiscal system of Great Britain." I thus only denied the right of foreign delegates to take *ad referendum* the question whether Great Britain and her Colonies should abandon their right to deal with their own fiscal matters. Subsequently Her Majesty's Government, in order to prove to the contracting Powers that their only wish was to secure to their cane sugar industry the same advantages of fair competition accorded to beet sugar when the Bounties were abolished, on the principles of strict Free Trade agreed by Article IV. of the Convention, not to expose foreign beet or other sugars to the Protectionist treatment of Differential Duties. As to the fourth question, the replies from the Colonies respecting the original Convention were received at different dates prior to the 5th April, 1888. The answer to the last paragraph is, as I have twice before stated, that the final Convention, and all the documents relating thereto, were sent to the Colonies immediately after the Treaty was signed on August 30, 1888, and that no expression of dissent from any of them has reached Her Majesty's Government.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of the Colonies as being bound if they should assent to the Convention as finally signed. Are they then to give their specific assent severally to the Convention before they are bound, or are they bound by the Convention from the moment of its signature?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I assume that they have assented, and having assented that they are bound by the provisions of the Convention.

SIR W. HARCOURT: At the time the Convention was signed the Colonies had no knowledge of Article 4 or Article 7. I want to know from the right hon. Gentleman at what time did the Colonies give their assent to Articles 4 and 7, which were only settled a few days before the signatures to the final Convention.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I have repeated the answer to that question three times in this House. The final Convention was sent to the Colonies immediately after its signature on the 30th of August, 1888. Nearly seven months have elapsed since that Convention was received in the Colonies, and there has been no expression of dissent whatever from any of the Colonies.

SIR W. HARCOURT: That is not even an attempt at an answer to my question. As to the original draft Convention, as I understand from the Under Secretary, the assent of the Colonies was given at various dates before April, 1888. Their assent was asked, and was formally given. After that date the Convention was materially altered by the introduction of Articles 4 and 7. What I ask is—Has the assent of the Colonies been asked to those articles as it was asked to the draft Convention, and has the consent of the Colonies been intimated to the final Convention in the same manner as it was intimated to the draft Convention?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: My answer to that question is precisely identical with the answer I have just given. The same process was adopted in regard to the signature of the final Convention as was adopted prior to the final Convention. The amended Convention, which was signed on the 30th of August, 1888, was sent to the Colonies in precisely the same manner as was done in the case of the draft Convention. Since then, nearly eight months have elapsed, and no dissent has been expressed by the Colonies to the final Convention. I conclude that we are justified in assuming that they assent to it.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh): I will ask a specific question upon that last point. The colony of Victoria imposes a Differential Duty as between cane and beetroot sugar. Has that Differential Duty been repealed?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: Certainly not. The legislation has not yet come into effect. When it does the colony of Victoria will probably take the same course as the other Legislatures.

MR. CHILDERS: Have they said they would propose to repeal the Differential Duty?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: Victoria has expressed no opinion whatever. There is no reason whatever for Her Majesty's Government to suppose that any one of the Colonies dissents from the Convention.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that no dissent has been specificially expressed, but I do not understand him to assert that any assent has ever been specificially expressed except to the original draft without the added clauses.

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I have nothing to add to the answers I have already given. They appear to be perfectly specific and correct.

THE CASE OF ELLEN SHEALS.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Ellen Sheals, an aged woman who was charged with obtaining Poor Law relief by fraud, the accusation being that, having £20 in the Post Office Savings Bank, she had been chargeable for two months to the St. George's Workhouse; whether he was aware that she was a soldier's widow, had been a ratepayer for many years, and stated to the magistrate that she had saved the money to escape a pauper's funeral; whether his attention has been drawn to the statement of Mr. Partridge, the magistrate, that she had committed an abominable fraud, and, after she had been reminded in prison for a fortnight, sent her to gaol for a month's hard labour; and whether he will inquire into the circumstances of the case?

MR. MATTHEWS: After a careful review of all the circumstances of this case, I felt justified in ordering this woman's discharge on the 7th inst. She had been in prison three weeks before her conviction. The magistrate having regard to her age, directed that the labour imposed upon her should be such as she could perform.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LABOUR.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now in a position to give any further information to the House with regard to the proposed International Conference on the Hours of Labour?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand): I gave a definite answer to the question last week. Communications are in progress, but no reply has yet been given to the invitation received from the Swiss Confederation. I can assure the hon. Member that no time will be lost in arriving at a determination on the question.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider whether he will consent to a Return showing what laws has been passed in different countries with the view of regulating the hours of labour during the last 20 years, and any eports, if there are any, of those different countries, as to the failure of those laws?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: If the hon. Member will be good enough to put his question on the Paper for Thursday, I will then tell him what it is in the power of the Government to do.

IRELAND—THE OLPHERT EVICTIONS.

MR. MAC NEILL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the fact that a woman named Bessie Doolan, upwards of 80 years of age, one of the tenants on the Olphert estate, whose eviction was stayed about three weeks ago on account of her illness, was evicted from her holding within the last few days, and that she died on Tuesday evening from the effects of privation and exposure; whether the Government intend to institute any inquiry into the circumstances of her death; whether any precautions will be taken for the preservation of the lives of destitute women and children on the Glashercoo portion

of Mr. Olphert's estate, who are to be evicted on Monday next; and, whether the report is true that directions have been given to burn the houses, from which the people of Glashercoo are about to be evicted, with paraffin oil; and if so, by whom will the cost of the paraffin oil be defrayed?

MR. MADDEN: The Constabulary Authorities report that the woman mentioned was not upwards of 80, as is alleged in the question, but about 60 years of age. Every consideration appears to have been shown in the matter. Her eviction was postponed from the 11th to the 13th of April to enable Mr. Olphert to send his covered carriage for her upon its being certified that she was able to be removed. Some three weeks afterwards she died, not from the effects of privation and exposure, but from asthma, with which she had been affected for many years. It is stated her death was not in the remotest degree hastened by the eviction.

MR. MAC NEILL: When was the covered carriage sent?

MR. MADDEN: Three weeks after the eviction; but the point of my answer is that according to the information I have received, the death of the woman was not due to the eviction.

CHURCH COLLECTIONS IN SCOTLAND.

MR. ANGUS SUTHERLAND (Sutherlandshire) asked the Lord Advocate, whether Returns are annually made to the Board of Supervision of the church collections in assessed parishes in Scotland, in terms of Section 54 of 8 and 9 Vic. c. 83; and, if so, where, and under what conditions, the details of such Reports may be consulted?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. J. B. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): These Returns are regularly reported in terms of the Act referred to, and are published in the Annual Report of the Board of Supervision.

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. BRADLAUGH: May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will be good enough to state the order of business to Thursday?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I understand that the Motion of the hon. Gentleman will be the first business on Thursday, but we hope that it may be disposed of by seven o'clock, and the next business will be the Committee on the Budget.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC ACT, 1888.

Copy ordered,

"Of List of Railway Companies who have deposited at the Board of Trade a revised Classification of Merchandize Traffic and Schedule of Maximum Rates and Charges, in compliance with Section 24 of 'The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888,' together with a List of Railways in respect of which an extension of the time for depositing has been granted."—(*Sir Michael Hicks Beach.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 142.]

MOTIONS.

ADVANCE NOTES TO SEAMEN BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Alfred Thomas, Bill to amend the Law with regard to Advance Notes to Seamen, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alfred Thomas, Sir Edward Reed, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. David Thomas, and Mr. Thomas Price.

Bill pesented, and read first time. [Bill 222.]

WINCHESTER BURGESSES (DISQUALIFICATION REMOVAL) BILL.

On Motion of Moss, Bill for the removal of the Disqualification of certain Burgesses of the City of Winchester, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Moss, Viscount Baring, and Mr. Beach.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 223.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

NAVAL DEFENCE BILL. (No. 186)

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing) moved the following Clause—

"A summary of the contracts entered into by virtue of this Act, for each contract vessel, her propelling machinery, and guns, shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within ninety days after the same is entered into, if Parliament is then sitting, and, if not, then within thirty days after the next meeting of Parliament."

Question—"New Clause, Summary of Contracts to be laid before Parliament. That the Clause be read a 2nd time" put and agreed to.

On the motion of Lord G. HAMILTON in Schedule 1, page 7, columns 2 and 5,

lines 8 and 10 were omitted; and on Schedule 2, page 8, columns 2 and 7, lines 10 to 13 were omitted.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I daresay the House will allow me now to read the Bill a third time.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the noble Lord that money is involved in the Bill.

Bill to be read a third time on Thursday.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

CLASS II.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

£492,562, to complete the sum for Stationery and Printing.

*MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanarkshire, N.E.): There are one or two points to which I should like briefly to call the attention of the House in connection with this Vote. The first has reference to the volumes containing the Acts of Parliament. Up to the present Parliament we received a good edition of the Acts, which it was a pleasure to preserve in our Libraries, but during the present Parliament we have received three volumes of very inferior quality both as to paper and type, and although everyone will admit that such Acts ought to be preserved in a series, no two of these volumes are either the same in shape or design. I am sure it is only necessary to call the attention of the Secretary of the Treasury to this fact to ensure its being remedied. I trust that in future we shall be supplied with the best edition of the Acts, similar to the one which is placed in the Library, and that we shall have the privilege of exchanging the three bad volumes we have received. There is another point to which I wish also to call the attention of the Secretary of the Treasury. A very great saving has been effected in the cost of Parliamentary papers by the new system of distribution, which I for one quite approve of, and I congratulate the House on the prospect of effecting a real economy in that direction, but I think that the saving ought to give the Secretary to the Treasury the means of affording a substantial convenience to Members. We often want to send Blue Books to our constituents on subjects which specially interest them. Speaking from an average experience I should say that the amount would be very moderate in the case of most Members, but if a Member is required to pay half-a-guinea for a Blue-book which he wishes to send to a constituent, he will probably refrain from doing so, although in many cases these Parliamentary papers are very useful and interesting. For example, there are two books of much interest to a mining constituency like mine—the Report of the Commission on the Depression of Trade, and the Report of the Commission on the Mines Acts. Both of them are bulky and expensive Blue Books, and, considering the saving which has now been effected, I would ask the hon. Gentleman if it would not be possible to allow a Member to send Blue Books and Parliamentary Papers to his constituents during a Session to the value of £5. Perhaps I ought to anticipate one argument which may possibly be used by the hon. Gentleman. Some time ago when I remarked to the hon. Gentleman that it was only reasonable that Members of Parliament should have the command of a certain number of Blue Books, the hon. Gentleman replied by asking a question, "Do you desire that they should have command of them to send to the booksellers?" I confess that when that searching inquiry was put to me I felt somewhat like the nervous lady in the crowd who was asked by a policeman to say whether she had picked her neighbour's pocket. The suggestion had certainly never occurred to me, and my experience is that, on the contrary, the great mass of the Blue Books and Parliamentary Papers we receive find their way into the waste paper-basket. I do not think there is any danger of their finding their way to the booksellers. We do not assume that the stationery in the library is put in the pockets of hon. Members, or that the silver spoons in the Tea Room afford a temptation which hon Members are unable to resist. I would therefore ask the hon. Gentleman to discuss the question entirely apart from any risk or danger of that kind, and I am sure that if that danger is eliminated he will admit that my proposal is only a reasonable one.

MR. A. PEASE (York): In the contract for printing forms for the Public Departments there is a condition that

the contractor should have a convenient office in London with sufficient material to enable him to prepare his contract in a good and workmanlike manner, to the satisfaction of the Controller of the Stationery Office. Now, I think it is hard on the contractor that he shall not be able to conduct the printing of the Government forms in the country, but that he should be obliged to have an office in the Metropolis. I can see no more reason why a man who is in a position to contract for the printing of telegraph forms or the deposit books of the Post Office Savings Banks should be required to have an office in London any more than the contractors for supplying the police and the troops with articles of clothing and furniture. I should be glad to see a much more even distribution of the Government work throughout the country.

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I should like on this Vote to ask what has been the result of the change which was introduced last year in regard to the circulation of Parliamentary Papers. I am informed that the change has led to a considerable reduction of cost and to greater facilities and advantages being afforded to Members, inasmuch as we can get all we want without being burdened by Papers we do not want. Another point I want to draw attention to is the cost of the old expensive style of printing. I hold in my hand a book called "The Journals of the House of Commons." It is of such proportions that it is almost unuseable, and it is got up in a most expensive and elaborate style. Many of us would be content to do without it, but under any circumstances it might be got up in a less expensive manner. I have here another volume which came to me a year or a year and a half ago. It is called "The General Index;" it weighs nearly a stone, and it it is printed in such a size and shape that it will not go upon any ordinary bookshelf. Indeed, it is of such proportions that it almost requires a Hercules to manage it, and I cannot help thinking that we might print a smaller and a more useful index in a cheaper form. There is a rumour that books of this nature are not to be issued again, but I should like to hear the announcement from the Government. I should further like to know if it is not possible to have all our Blue Books and Papers of one size. I find that I rarely get two of the same guage. This may be a small matter, but it certainly prevents their being kept in order. Another question is, whether there cannot be some uniformity in the issue of Parliamentary Papers; I have here three books which purport to be the same. They are very useful volumes indeed, containing the Acts of Parliament passed in each Session. It will be noticed they are all three of different sizes; one is blue and the other red, and the names of the books although they contain the same information for different years, are all different. The one I hold in my hand was issued in 1886. It is a comparatively modest volume, and is called "Public General Statutes, 49 and 50, Victoria, 1886." In 1887 the name appears to have been changed to "Public General Acts, 1887, published by authority," and last year the book was simply entitled "Public General Acts, published by authority." The system of cutting them appears to have been given up. I think as they are books of constant reference, the House might adopt some system of having one size, similar title, and one style; and further, that they should be got up in a way that would permit hon. Members arranging them on their bookshelves.

*SIR H. MAXWELL (A LORD of the TREASURY, Wigton): The hon. Member for North Islington has drawn attention to the volumes for the last three years, and perhaps it will relieve my hon. Friend's mind when I say that there is no political portent whatever in the colour or form of those volumes. Until the end of 1886 these Acts of Parliament were produced by private printers, but since January, 1887, the Stationery Office has been responsible for the printing of the Acts The difference in the size of the volumes is accounted for by the fact that the volume of 1887 was cut, while that of 1888 was uncut. In future they will all be uncut. ["Oh!"] Of course, if hon. Members are of opinion that a volume is more valuable cut than uncut, we will convey that opinion to the Stationery Office, but I may remark that the bibliographic value of an uncut volume is greater than that of a cut. The hon. Member for North-West Lanarkshire has drawn attention to

the quality of the paper on which the volumes were printed, and I think he said a better quality was supplied to the Library of the House. At all events, the volume is produced at a cost to the public of 3s., and when it was in the hands of a private firm it cost almost exactly double that sum, so that there is a considerable saving in that respect. As to the distribution of papers, the hon. Member alluded to the change which has taken place in the fulfilment of that part of our duty, and I am glad that he expressed satisfaction with it so far. It is still in the experimental stage, though we hope to effect a considerable saving in the future without inconvenience to Members. It may be admitted that it is rather a tax upon hon. Members to send down to the constituencies volumes for which payment has to be made. But if an unlimited supply were at the disposal of hon. Members without payment, it would be very difficult to instruct the Stationery Office what size of edition should be printed. Formerly, I think, the number printed of Blue Books for the full delivery list was 1,100; and for the short delivery list considerably less than half that number. Now, we have only 200 copies of each Parliamentary Paper sent to this House to be supplied to Members, and in no single instance has that number been exceeded. Therefore, there is that much saved. Then there is the suggestion of the hon. Member that each Member should be entitled to a free set of Blue Books above a certain annual cost. But I do not suppose that many Members, from the nature of their constituencies, are likely to require the same Blue Books; and I presume that, by friendly arrangements, a Member who required a dozen or twenty copies of one Blue Book would be able to obtain them from a dozen or twenty Members. In the changes made we have asked for the good-natured co-operation of the Members, and so far we have succeeded. A question was asked of the Secretary to the Treasury about the Blue Books going to the booksellers. That point has been under the consideration of the Committee. Preference is shown by certain Hon. Members to certain booksellers, who thus receive Blue Books in advance of the rest of the trade, and thereby they get an advantage. Well, I will be frank with the Committee, and tell them exactly how the matter stands. It is the privilege of a Member, if he chooses, to notify the Vote Office to have a copy of every Paper published sent to him. I believe at the present moment there are about 80 hon. Members who receive copies of every Blue Book or Parliamentary Paper published. Of these 80 Members, there are some 20 who never see those Papers, for the simple reason that they send them direct to the booksellers. It is for this House to express an opinion whether that is altogether a creditable transaction. As to the necessity for printers of Parliamentary Papers having an office in London, the reason is obvious; it would be exceedingly inconvenient to have to send Papers (which are generally wanted in a hurry) into the country to be printed, but there may be circumstances which form an exception to the rule, and they will not escape our attention. I think if the hon. Member (Mr. Bartley), who is a Member of the Committee which has charge of the form in which the Parliamentary Papers are issued, would give us the advantage of his advice, we shall be able to improve them.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I am always sorry in Committee of Supply to see independent Members putting pressure on the Government to increase rather than decrease the expenditure. I hope the right hon. Member for Wigton will be a little more hard hearted in reference to the demands made upon him by my hon. Friend the Member for Lanarkshire. I think it would be a very dangerous precedent to enlarge the gratuitous privileges of Members of this House, and to supply Blue Books to the Members of this House from a limited money scale would be an exceedingly bad thing. You do not know what may be done in the matter, and I heard with regret the statement as to what is done by some hon. Members. Many of us have another method of disposing of our Blue Books. Now, there is a free library in the borough which I represent, and when I have read, as I always do read, every line of every Blue Book, I hand them to the free library in the hope that my constituents will do the same. At all events, that is a course which could be adopted by borough

Members. I do not say that it would answer the same purpose in the case of county constituencies. I, for one, should be extremely sorry to see the practice of the gratuitous distribution of Blue Books.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): In this Vote there is a very large increase on the cost of paper —£15,000. Whether the increase is because of the greater number of documents issued or due to the better quality of the paper, it is surely a very serious sum. My own observation would lead me to the conclusion that the paper which is in use now, as compared with the paper on which the Returns of years ago are printed, and to be seen in the Library, is by no means improved. There is another point to which I should like to call attention, and that is the extraordinary delay that takes place between the order for a Return or Paper being printed and its distribution. The delay is so great as to be almost, a Parliamentary scandal. I put a question on this subject to the First Lord of the Treasury, and he gave me a most courteous reply, and asked if I could give him any instances. The right hon. Gentleman is perfectly aware that the task involves a considerable amount of labour. But I will give him two or three instances which I myself have investigated, and the right hon. Gentlemen may take them as a sample. Now, there was a Return in the early part of the Session of cases under the Criminal Law Procedure Act (Ireland) laid on the Table on the 21st February, and the Paper was not distributed for several weeks. There was also a Paper with regard to the Land Purchase Question laid on the Table on the 19th March. The order for printing was given on the 21st March, and the Paper did not get into the hands of Members until the 18th April. Then, again, the Return as to Resident Magistrates, merely a list of names occupying only two pages, was laid on the Table on the 19th March, and although the order for printing was given on the 21st March, the Paper was not delivered at our residences until the 15th April. Another Return, for which the order was given on the 15th April, is not in our hands at the present moment. I hope it will be felt that I have not overstated the case, and that the attention of the Government will be directed to the matter. I am one of those who think we cannot properly perform our functions in this House unless we have full and accurate information relating to matters brought before us. I will now call attention to another matter, and that is the method of reporting our debates. There was a Committee appointed—a Joint Committee of Members of this and the other House —to look into this matter. I believe they sat eight times and examined ten witnessesin last Sessoin. They presented a Report declaring the system to be inconvenient and unsatisfactory, and though they did not recommend an official report they recommended an improved *Hansard*. In pursuance of that Report the Secretary to the Treasury, I presume, acting on the part of the Government, entered into a contract with a certain firm—a copy of which contract I hold in my hand—the firm of Macrae, Curtis and Co., and I notice one fact in connection with that firm as to which this House—as a point affecting its honor and reputation—should be very jealous. One of our Rules is that no one who is a Member of this House shall be interested in a matter of profit under a Parliamentary arrangement, and I believe I am right in saying that one of the parties interested in this contract is one of the Members for Kensington. Of course, I do not wish to impute anything that can be regarded as in the least improper to that Gentleman; but still there is the name of a Member of this House in connection with this particular contract, although it is the law that no Member of this Assembly shall have any interest in a Government contract. I may here refer to the fact that the printing of *Hansard* is considered by that firm as involving a most valuable connection, for I remember having myself received a circular asking me to take shares in the Company in the event of this contract having the approval of the House of Commons; and I have noticed that the firm is blossoming into what is called the Hansard Publishing Union, so that it is evident the Hansard Printing Company recognise among their assets of value the right of printing and publishing the debates of this House. As to how the contract is carried out I think this House

can hardly be satisfied. I do not think that the conditions of the contract with regard to type and paper have been carried out—that is if the conditions lay down that they should give us good paper and type. Moreover, whereas in old days we could go into the Library and see each number of *Hansard* with an index, all published within a very short time, now, although we have numbers of the new *Hansard* up to within three or four days of every discussion, they are without any index at all, so that it is almost impossible until you get a whole volume—and the first complete volume has just been issued—to refer accurately to what has taken place. My hon. Friend near me points out to me that the first volume only goes down to the 15th March this year. I do hope the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury will turn his attention to the manner in which the new contract for *Hansard's Debates* is being carried out. I am one of those who cling to the extreme importance to our having an accurate record of our debates, I do not consider that *Hansard* realizes that; but I hold it to be most important that we should seek to retain the traditions of this House by preserving what has been done in the past and in earlier times.

*Sir J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras): I wish to make an observation on one point that has been already alluded to, and to say that it is no credit to the House of Commons that people who have the contract to report our Debates should be touting for subscriptions to their Company in the way they have been doing. I had over 20 applications myself, and other Members of this House have also received a large number. That is not satisfactory. We ought to ascertain that a firm which undertakes to do our work has sufficient capital to carry on the business, and that if they hope to go on successfully, they should not have to tout about London in the way adopted in this case. One further observation I have to make is this, that in some respects the reporting is satisfactory, but that though there is a considerable amount of accuracy in the reports of the observations made in this House, on more than one occasion I have noticed certain absurd mistakes with regard to names. The other day, in reporting the discussion on the operations of the Endowed School Commissioners with regard to the City Parochial Charities Fund, they gave the name of Mr. Anstie, one of the Charity Commissioners—a name which is well known to everybody who has anything to do with these matters—as "Mr. Anstey," spelling it "A n s t e y" instead of "A n s t i e." I trust this matter will receive the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury, and that we shall not see these errors in future.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I should like to correct an impression which a remark of the hon. Baronet might convey. He said I was a member of the Standing Committee on Printing Parliamentary Papers, and that, therefore, I was to a certain extent responsible for the things I complained of. At no time, however, were these volumes or arrangements as to their printing, to which I have referred, brought before the Committee. I should have been extremely glad if the printing arrangements had been sent before the Committee. It is a mistake to say that the Committee has in past, at least, been responsible in any way for these things.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford): I think, Sir, that some steps should be taken with regard to forwarding to the Irish Members Papers relating to Irish matters. It is very important that they should have these Papers as early as possible, and they ought not to be obliged to have to write for them, as is the case at present. Beyond this, Members ought to have the Statute Books which the Government are bringing out; they would be exceedingly useful to us if we could have them at an early date. With regard to *Hansard*, I think the new arrangement has introduced a great change for the better. I allude to the asterisk they put opposite the names of hon. Members who revise their speeches. That seems to be a Heaven-sent idea, because no one need now be under any obligation to revise his speeches, as everybody will know whether they are revised or not, thus conferring a boon on gentlemen, who will no longer be under the supposition that they have revised their speeches. With regard to the printing, I appeal to the Government whether they cannot get about 100 volumes of M.S. belonging to

the Ordnance Survey in Ireland, now at the Royal Irish Academy, put into type. They might take the money for this from what is spent on horse racing. Certainly, I was amazed to find that they had been allowed to remain in the manuscript; and had they been destroyed, or stolen, or lost in any way, they would have been absolutely irrecoverable. Remember this work was done at enormous expense, you employed the very best intellect you could get, as far as the archæological and antiquarian researches were concerned, and yet the results of the labours of those intellects are lying absolutely unknown to the general public, and exposed to all sorts of risks. Had the Chief Secretary been in his place, I should have appealed to him in this matter. As his name is detested in Ireland, I should have been pleased to have given him an opportunity of doing something which would, at any rate, secure the approval of the Irish people.

MR. ARTHUR ACLAND (York, W.R. Rotherham): I wish to ask whether anything definite is being done about editing the reports of Royal Commissions. We, who are Members of the Committee, have ascertained that there is no single authority who looks after the editing of these papers. The Member for Rushcliffe has spoken of the space of time which intervenes between the order for the printing of the Papers and the issue of them, and I think that this difficulty might be avoided if there were somebody in charge of this particular duty.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That does not arise on this Vote.

MR. ACLAND: I think, Sir, I may raise a point as to the position which the Comptroller of the Stationery Office holds in reference to these matters.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Vote refers to matters of printing, and not to editing.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): In reference to the remarks of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. T. M. Healy) as to being called upon to sign orders for Papers, I beg to suggest a remedy which I have adopted, and that is to sign a general order for all Papers to be sent. I then go through the Papers and find many matters worthy of notice, which I should have missed had I merely looked to the list of printed papers sent out. In regard to the delay in the issue of papers, I hope the Government will follow the practice which has been adopted by the Australian Parliament, and establish a Government printing office. The Government printing office there prints quite as much matter as is necessary here, and I believe that with the large number of Government departments we have, the heads of departments would be able to save many thousands of pounds if we had a Government printing office. I do trust that the Government will inquire into this matter, because I feel confident that, if they do, they will establish such an office and follow the example of the Australian Parliament with, I am sure, advantage to this country.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I want some information as to the amount of this Vote. We have had a reform, and the result is a very considerable increase in the Estimate. As far as the printing is concerned, the increase is £3,000, and I cannot understand if so very much less printing has to be done, why the Estimate should be so much in excess. Then, again, there is an increase of several thousand pounds in the item for paper. I do not know what is the explanation of that, unless the Secretary to the Treasury got a hint about the formation of a paper syndicate, and so took an extra amount in the Estimate to meet the amount which that syndicate was likely to mulct the public in regard to the price of paper. With the exception of the reduction of £4,500 for *Hansard*, there is absolutely an increase of £21,000 on this Vote. I should like to hear the reason for this, and why, when so little is sent out, we are paying £15,000 extra for paper, and £3,000 extra for printing. Then with reference to the *London Gazette*. I am glad to see there is a change, and that instead of asking £2,200 for the *Gazette*, the charge has been decreased to £1,000. In regard to the reduction of £4,500 in the charges for *Hansard*, I notice we are getting 120 copies. I should like to know if those copies are required for this House, or what is done with them. In regard to the reports themselves, complaint has been made that by giving the speeches in the first person, the public is misled into the idea that the reports are verbatim. I hope the Secretary to the Treasury will give me some

explanation on the points which I have raised.

*Mr. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid): I should like to refer to some remarks made by the hon. Member for Leicester some time since, when he pointed out that under the new system of editing *Hansard*, all speeches are reported in the first person, which gives the impression that they are verbatim, whereas they are not. Now I have examined my own speeches, and I find that the report is taken from the *Times* newspaper; there it is in the third person, but it is put into the first person, and is consequently very misleading. I have not the slightest objection to my speeches being compressed into the smallest possible space—I think the more they are compressed, the better—but what I do say is that we should not have a report which, in the first instance, is published in the third person, twisted into the first person, and thereby made ridiculous. I think the system of reporting in the third person is best for ordinary persons like myself, who do not aspire to lead in this House. If speeches are to be reported verbatim, no doubt the first person reports are the best, but I think the third person is best for those speeches of which only a summary is given. I believe those who are interested in this matter will agree with me that speeches which are not really reported in full should be put in the third person. Then with regard to the remarks made by the hon. Member for Longford about the insertion of the asterisk. Now, I have found it quite impossible to correct speeches which, although put in the first person, are merely transcribed from the report in the *Times*, because whole sentences, and sometimes whole paragraphs are left out. I have taken the trouble occasionally to insert a word or two, but really I could not take the responsibility of correcting the speech, and I do hope that, in future, speeches which are not reported *in extenso* will be given in the third person.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): I wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury a question with regard to Parliamentary Papers. Are they issued to free libraries? Although many of the blue books which are printed may not be of much service to these institutions, there are, amongst the papers issued to the House of Commons, some which are of the highest value for free libraries, and I would ask the Secretary to the Treasury how the item of £100 contained in this Vote for the purpose is allocated? I venture to suggest that it seems a very small sum for this purpose, but small as it is, I should like to hear from the Secretary to the Treasury how it is apportioned amongst the various public libraries of this country. I am sure that every Member of this House would be glad if the Government could hold out a hope that this sum, if insufficient, shall be increased.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Before the Secretary to the Treasury answers the question which has been put him, I wish in the first place to point out that the issue of the revised statutes has only progressed to the extent of one volume. You can buy this volume for seven shillings. Now a number of Blue Books, which are absolutely useless, are issued at charges as high as thirty shillings. Anybody can get these, and I would suggest that when you get a useful volume like this published at seven shillings, Members should have the opportunity of applying for them on the same terms as they have in regard to these useless blue books. And then there is the question of the translation of the Brehon Law. There is in respect of that a sum of £200 in this Vote, and although a considerable sum has already been expended, no volume of these laws has been issued for something like 20 years. The gentleman whom you have appointed to translate them into English has made application to the Commissioners to be allowed to divide the work into three volumes all of which are to be published simultaneously. Now, Sir, the result is that we shall have to wait three or four years before we see a specimen of this gentleman's work. In the first place it may be reasonably doubted if it was wise to give the task to one who, until a few years ago, was totally ignorant of the Irish language. It is hardly to be expected he would be competent to continue a work begun by the most eminent Irish scholars. However, by his compact with the Commissioners he secures absolute immunity; he gets remunerated for the work before we see what it is like. I think we may ask the Secretary to the Treasury to

impress upon the Commissioners the desirability of issuing the work so far as it has gone so that we may judge the character of the work. I have no confidence in the competency of this gentleman.

*MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): There is one point to which I wish to direct the attention of the Committee before they pass from this Vote. I hope I am in order in doing so. In the observations which we have had from different Members on both sides of the House in regard to the question of printing, we have not heard one word as to the circumstances under which the printing is executed. I should not have thought myself justified in referring to these circumstances had I not seen in his place the Secretary to the Treasury, who gave utterance some few months since to a statement that printing for the Government Establishment was being executed under such conditions as to be practically beyond the utmost powers of man. Now, Sir, I think this is a question which may fairly be commented on when such a sentence as this is uttered from the Treasury Bench. The conditions of work exceed the power of man to endure. And I should like to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, who has already answered me once upon this question, although his answer was not satisfactory, whether, in the future, the Members of this House are going to be held up to execration in the country for having assisted, or at any rate not having resisted a system of work which exceeds the endurance of man to perform? If we pride ourselves upon our humanity, I think when we come to read the Reports of the Sweating Committee, we shall come to the conclusion that, in our collective capacity as Members of the House of Commons, it is our duty to protest against being sweaters ourselves. I was glad to hear from the hon. Member for Canterbury the expression of a hope that the Government would establish a printing office of its own. I believe he is thoroughly conconversant with the subject and with the results obtained from Government printing offices in our Colonies. I understand from him that these results are exceedingly satisfactory, and I wish to know whether we are to continue this system of sub-contracting, and letting out the Government printing with the results which the hon. Member himself has characterized to this House in language which I have had the honour of repeating; and I do earnestly hope that we shall have some assurance from the hon. Gentleman that in future the Government contracts will be in such a shape as will confine them to firms paying Trades Union rates of wages, and that, if possible, an eight hours' clause will be introduced into them.

*MR. JACKSON: Perhaps it will be convenient if I reply now to some of the questions which have been put to me. The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham raised the question of the delay in the presentation of Papers. Now, I am not prepared to deny that it is possible to make some improvement in the direction which the hon. Member suggests, but I wish to point out as clearly as I can to the Committee that there is a little confusion sometimes in the minds of Members as to where the delay arises, and as to the causes of the delay. The date of the order for printing the paper which appears on each document is not necessarily an indication that there has been unreasonable delay, even although there may have been a considerable period elapsed between the date of the order for printing and the date of the circulation of the paper to Members. It is no indication, I repeat, that there has been unreasonable delay, either on the part of the Department or on the part of the printers, for it has been the habit—and the habit may be a good one, or a bad one, but it can easily be altered if necessary—it has been found very convenient with reference to papers presented to Parliament, to present them in what is called "dummy" form. That enables the House to give an order for printing, but it by no means follows that it can be printed forthwith—and in many cases the order is actually given before a single step has been taken towards providing the information which is ordered by the Return to be supplied to the House.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS: In the instances I gave I ascertained that the Papers were not laid on the Table of the House in "dummy form."

*MR. JACKSON: If the hon. Member has ascertained that in the cases to which he referred the information was

ready at the time when the order for printing was given, then I think there was an unreasonable amount of delay. But I want to make it clear to the Committee that in many cases of Returns moved for by hon. Members, although the order for printing is given, the information cannot possibly be obtained for a considerable time, and that explains the apparent delay in the circulation of the paper. I may assure the hon. Member that we are taking steps to secure the speediest possible circulation of papers. Well now, Sir, reference has been made by several hon. Members to the question of the contract entered into for the printing and publishing of the debates and proceedings of the Houses of Parliament. Some hon. Members have complained that the reports are now made in the first person, instead of in the third as formerly. Well, Sir, I have no doubt—in fact I know from communications made to me by the contractors—that they are only anxious to do what is desired and to meet the general convenience of Members of the House. But I will point out, in defence of the course which has been taken, that in the Committee to which this question was referred—and possibly the hon. Gentleman the Senior Member for Northampton will well remember this—certainly one Member, if not more than one Member, laid great stress upon the desirability of what he called treating all Members alike, as some speeches had in the past had more prominence given to them than others, and had been printed in the first person, and it was the strongly expressed wish that the same treatment, as far as possible, should be extended to all Members of the House. I believe, therefore, that the contractors, in adopting the plan which they have followed, have pursued that which they believe to have been the express wish of the Committee to which the question was referred; and they have supposed that they have been consulting the general convenience of Members by adopting the practice.

*Mr. DE LISLE: The point I wish to impress upon the Committee is that the reports of hon. Members like myself which are given in the third person in the *Times* are taken and twisted back into the first person, and thus purport to be verbatim, whereas they are nothing of the sort. If all speeches are to be reported *in extenso* in the first person, so much the better for everybody; but what I object to is that a third person report should be turned into a first person report, and thereby made really a caricature of the speech.

*Mr. JACKSON: I do not wish to press the point or to discuss it at greater length, but I am sure that the matter having been called attention to will have the effect of causing the complaint to be looked into carefully, and that the contractors will see if anything can be done to meet the wishes of hon. Members in this matter. I must not be taken as either admitting, or confirming, or denying the statement made by the hon. Member that these reports are simply taken from some other report, because it is one of the conditions of the contract, and that condition I have reason to know is complied with—that there shall always be in the Gallery reporters who are taking notes of the debates and proceedings of the House. Well, Sir, a question has been asked about the 125 printed volumes supplied by the contractors, and what becomes of them. They are distributed not only in the libraries of both Houses of Parliament, but also throughout the Government Departments. The number is the same as was taken under the old arrangement, and I believe it is necessary to meet the requirements of the various Public Departments. The hon. Baronet the Member for St. Pancras has raised a question as to the company which has the contract having touted for subscriptions. The only answer is, I suppose, that they, like most promoters of companies, have gone to the men who they think have the money and are able to subscribe. Of course, we have nothing to do with the company or with its formation. Something has been said that in the prospectus this contract was treated as a valuable asset. But I think this really has no bearing on the question. I may say I believe that, as a matter of fact, this company did acquire from Mr. Hansard, who previously did this work, his stock and plant, the arrangement also including the right to continue to use the name of Hansard in connection with these debates. My own impression is that it is rather a matter of convenience that the work should be continued under the title of *Hansard*, perhaps, whatever

money value may attach to the right to use the name. So far as the company is concerned, and so far as the Contract is concerned, the Government have followed the recommendations of the Committee. They advertised publicly for tenders, and having done so, they felt that unless very strong reasons could be assigned against it, it was their duty to accept the lowest tender. That is the course we adopted in this case. The Government took steps to sufficiently protect themselves, and to ensure the carrying out of the contract, and I am bound to say that so far as my experience goes, I should have thought that the reports are more full than formerly, and that certainly the present system is a great improvement upon that which has hitherto prevailed. Well, now, the hon. Member for Islington (Mr. Bartley) referred again to the size of the volumes of Statutes, and said that the form of printing was not submitted to the Committee. We hope the Committee will deal with all these questions, and that the hon. Gentleman will make some suggestion by which some economy may be effected in the direction desired. The hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. T. Healy) spoke about the distribution of the Papers. It is open to any Member who desires to have the whole of the Papers which are presented to Parliament, to give instructions for them to be forwarded to him. We had hoped we should be able to effect some economy, and that hon. Members who really did not attach very great importance to having the whole of the Papers, would co-operate with us in cutting down the printing bill as far as possible. The hon. Gentlemen also referred to the publication of the revised Statutes. The revised Statutes are not issued as Parliamentary Papers. They are now being published under the authority of the Stationery Office, but they have never been treated as Parliamentary Papers. The custom has been for anyone who desires to possess them to buy them. The price, I understand, is 7s. 6d. per volume.

MR. T. M. HEALY: When will they be completed?

*MR. JACKSON: The second volume is just about to be issued. The hon. Member referred to the printing of certain Irish MS., and the hon. Member for Mid Tyrone (Mr. M. Kenny) asked what payment was made to Dr. Atkinson for his work in respect to the manuscripts. I believe I am correct in saying that the work is only paid for as it is performed; that so much is paid per sheet. The Commissioners under whose care this work is being carried on estimate that £200 will be required for the work in the ensuing year, the sum taken last year. In reference to the particular manuscript referred to, I will call the attention of the Commissioners to what the hon. Gentleman has said.

MR. T. M. HEALY: How far do the revised Statutes come down?

*MR. JACKSON: To the end of the reign of Queen Anne. The hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clarke) raised the question of the increased cost of printing and paper. The increase in the Printing Department is due to the fact that when the Estimate was framed, the Stationery Office were warned by several Departments that there would be a considerable increase of work. One of the Departments which anticipated considerably increased expenditure was the Patent Office. Consequent upon the recommendation of the Committee of Inquiry, an alteration has been made in the form of the Patent Office publications, and the Office is now issuing an illustrated journal which I believe will add considerably to the cost of printing, although it will lead to great saving in the Office generally. The excess estimated in the Patent Office alone was £5,000. As to the cost of paper, there was, at the time the Estimate was framed, an evident tendency in the market to advance. Some contracts which were made at that time showed an advance on the former price of about 5 per cent on the general run of paper, and as much as 18 per cent on certain qualities of writing paper. I understand that since that time the market has shown less strength, and I hope it may prove to be that the amount which has been taken for paper will be found to be more than ample to meet the requirements. But it is quite impossible in estimating so long beforehand, and with a fluctuating market, to calculate with any degree to nicety what the actual cost will be. Now, in reference to the point raised by the hon. Member for North-East Lanarkshire

(Mr. Cuninghame Graham), I think there is some confusion in his mind as to what I said or what I intended to convey in answer to a question which was put to me on a previous occasion. The question was raised in the first instance by an inquiry as to the delay in printing certain papers. At that time all the estimates were being printed, and I said it, as I believed, in defence, not only of the contractors, but also of their workpeople, that the contractors and workpeople were straining every nerve to keep pace with the demand, which at that time was excessive, and was unusual. But I did not intend to convey that the term "sweating" was applicable in any sense or form to the state of things. Anyone who has any experience of business knows that there may come times of pressure when the workpeople are most willing to come to the aid of their employers by working longer hours. If that were not so very often it would be difficult to carry on business at all. Every effort will be made to avoid such pressure being put on the work people, but at the same time it must not be understood that the pressure is put on them without their benefiting by it. I have, I think, as much sympathy with the working classes as the hon. Member. I have had a good deal to do with working men and I know that in times of pressure they willingly do the very best they can.

*Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: The hon. Gentleman has made observations calculated to induce the Committee to believe that I am not aware that the system of overtime exists in different industries. I am well aware that such a system does exist, and it is one of the objects of my life to put that system down.

*Mr. JACKSON: That may or may not be a very good object, but I may tell the hon. Member I have known a great many workpeople who were very glad on occasions to work overtime for the extra payment it brought them.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Has the hon. Gentleman informed himself as to whether it is reported officially in the Labour Reports of America that the Government interference with the time of *employés* under some pressure has tended to a reduction of the wages of the men 20 per cent all round?

*Mr. JACKSON: I have no knowledge of that circumstance, but if the hon. Member puts it forward as a fact the Committee may well accept it as such. I was only speaking on the general question because my attention has been called to very extravagant statements which followed upon the answer I gave in regard to the delay in the printing of certain papers. As to the point raised by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. H. Gardner) the position of matters with regard to Free Libraries is this:—The noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill) came under an obligation to the House in answer to an appeal made to him that he would consider the question of a free distribution of certain papers to certain Free Libraries, and with a view of carrying that object out the sum of £100 was placed on the Estimates. The plan which has been adopted is this:—That any free library making application for Papers has been invited to say what Papers would be of interest in the district, and so far as I know all the applications have been readily acceded to. I do not wish to say too much to encourage further applications, but I am sure the hon. Gentleman will be gratified to know that so far we have not been obliged to refuse any application.

*Sir W. BARTTELOT (Sussex, North-West): My hon. Friend has just said that the increase in the cost of paper is estimated to be something like 5 per cent, and he has also told us that there is likely to be an increase in the Patent Office in respect of printing. When we come to look at the different heads under which the charge is placed—printing, paper, parchments, binding, and small stores—we see what a very large sum of money is expended in the various Departments. In olden days we had the expenditure of each Office set out separately, so that we could compare the cost of one Office with that of another. These sums are so large that we really ought to have much more detailed information than we are able to get from the Paper now before us.

*Mr. JACKSON: If my hon. and gallant Friend will refer to pages 165, 166, 167, and 168 of the Estimates, he will find the details of the amount expended in each Office are given.

Sir W. FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston Div.): I should like to raise a point

in reference to the publication of the Division Lists. It would be an advantage to Members in calculating the length of debates, and also in regard to the question of pairing, if at the top of the Division Lists there could be printed the hour at which the Division takes place.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I entirely agree with the Secretary to the Treasury that the present system of *Hansard* has proved satisfactory to the vast majority of the Members of the House. In regard to the little details which have been mentioned, I have no doubt there will be improvement as matters go on. But I was rather surprised at the hon. Gentleman's explanation of excess in the cost of paper. I gathered from the hon. Gentleman's remarks that the Comptroller had been told that paper had gone up in some cases 5 per cent and in others 18 per cent, and that certain contracts, based on the increased prices, had been made. The Comptroller has been humbugged by the contractors, for it is a hard and positive fact that paper has not gone up in the market during the last six months. The paper syndicate in no way affects the paper required for the House. I agree with the hon. Gentleman who holds that we ought to hesitate very much before we have a public printing department. Besides the £25,000 per annum which the department would cost, we would be providing more people with a plea for pensions further on. But it is only reasonable that when making contracts, we should ascertain whether a fair wage is paid by the contractors. The system of contracting for printing is much better than having a public printing department, with its superintendents, deputy superintendents, and so on. The real reason why there is delay in the printing of papers is that the contractor has not a sufficient amount of type. Members are sometimes kept waiting week after week for papers which they are told are in the hands of the printer. The Government ought to make arrangements with the printer for speedy work, for which they might arrange to pay a higher price. I also desire to again point out that the price of Blue Books and Parliamentary Papers is excessive. I hold in my hand a Parliamentary Paper the price of which was 1s. 4½d. It is stated to be under 12 ounces, but the cost of paper, ink, machinery, and printing will not exceed 2d. At the present day people go in for large sales and small profits; but I do not think the Government ought to require any profit on such papers. There are no doubt many public libraries and private people who would be glad of Blue Books and other Parliamentary Papers if they could only obtain them at a reasonable price.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): The Ordnance Survey is of great value, and I should like to know when it is likely to be completed.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo N.): I think that the Irish Members have great cause to complain of the delay which takes place in the presentation of papers to the House. The hon. Member for Rushcliffe Division (Mr. J. E. Ellis), referred to the fact that something like five weeks elapse before papers relating to Irish matters are presented. It will be in the recollection of the Secretary to the Treasury that there was ordered to to be printed a paper, relating to the Ballycotton pier, and that five weeks transpired before it was completed. There is another and a cognate matter to which I would draw attention—I do not know exactly if it comes within the region of the hon. Gentleman's department—and that is the great want of regularity and uniformity, that takes place in presenting the Returns of the Irish Land Commission to the House. Some little time ago it was my duty to submit to the House a Bill upon the Irish Land question, and for some little time previously I had been following the issue of these Returns giving the decisions of the Irish Land Commission, and I found, as a rule, there was great delay in the presentation. I am quite aware that at the present time the House is in possession of the rentals fixed in January and February, but though I saw the last Blue Book four or five days ago, copies are not yet in the possession of Irish Members. I think we have just cause of complaint on this account. I do not know how it may be on English subjects, but I am quite sure that cases such as those instanced by the hon. Member for Rushcliffe might be multiplied indefinitely in which information on this great Irish Question has been withheld. I do not know who is to blame for the delay, but I hope

somebody will find a remedy for it. I notice that when the Chief Secretary wants to supply the country with information on some point affecting Irish administration he very readily finds the means, either by a communication to Mr. Armytage, or some other way; but there is always delay in supplying Members with information upon which they can form their opinions and base their convictions in these matters. The Secretary of the Treasury is always ready to meet the wishes of Members, and I trust he will give his attention to this matter of the presentation of Irish Papers.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I cannot but think the reply of the Secretary to the Treasury as to the delay in, and the control over, the printing is entirely unsatisfactory. The hon. Gentleman mildly says he will see if something can be done, but something radical should be done in this matter. If we question a Minister about the production of Papers, he invariably says he has no control, and we never get a satisfactory answer. I object to the system of contract, though not altogether, on the grounds urged by the hon. Member for Lanark (Mr. Cuninghame Graham). We work overtime ourselves, and I do not see why, when work presses, printers should not be invited to do the same; but what I object to is that by these Government contracts contractors are not bound under severe penalties to fulfil their undertakings, as would be the case if a private firm gave out large contracts. The contractor finds it cheaper to keep up a moderate staff, and we have to wait his convenience. We want more control over him, and I hope this will be taken into consideration, with the object of making a radical change in this respect. It might be possible, perhaps, to have a Government establishment where urgent work might be done with a responsible head, and other printing not so urgent might still be put out to contract. Something of this kind might be done, but nothing can be more unsatisfactory than to be told that we have no control over the printer when we are kept waiting for papers. The rise in the price of paper is, I suppose, due to the paper syndicate to which the hon. Member for Northampton alluded. There has been a scare in paper as there has been in a good many other things. I hope the Government will take care to watch what is going on and act accordingly. As to the reports of our speeches, I think quite enough has been said about Members not being reported fully, and yet in the first person; but what I object to is the system of asterisks. Looking over the report of your speech in a condensed form you, perhaps, find that the accidental omission of a "not" or a "none" has entirely reversed your meaning and you would like to correct that. But then if you do so the speech is marked with an asterisk, and you are made responsible for the correctness of the speech in the form in which it is presented. I hope the system of asterisks will be discontinued, so that you may make small corrections without making yourself responsible for the speech altogether in the form printed. In regard to the printing of the Statutes mentioned, I should like to know whether the old Scotch Statutes still on the Statute Book are included?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: I cannot say at the moment. As the hon. Member is perhaps aware, there are many volumes of old Scotch Acts to be found on the shelves in the passages leading to the Library.

SIR W. FOSTER: The Secretary to the Treasury has not noticed my suggestion as to printing the times of the Divisions.

MR. JACKSON: I will make a note of it. It hardly rests with me, for the "Votes and Proceedings" are not under the control of the Treasury, but I will bring it under the notice of the controlling authorities.

Vote agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £22,347, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, and of the Office of Land Revenue Records and Inrolments."

*MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I propose to move the reduction of this Vote by £1,000, and to call attention to a subject raised last year, and to the attitude of the Government then and since. The subject will be familiar

especially to Scotch Members—the way in which the Office of Woods and Forests have dealt with Crown rights of fishing in Scotland, more especially the alienation and sale of the right of fishing in Loch Morar in Invernessshire. The subject was brought before the House last autumn, but previous to that, in July, the Secretary to the Treasury had been asked a question as to the sale of these rights, and he said he could not lay Papers on the Table, and declined to state the circumstances of the sale. On the 8th November, in Committee of Supply, the subject was raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Inverness. Previously there had been a discussion initiated by the hon. Members for Northampton and Preston, on a variety of matters connected with the administration of the Department of Woods and Forests in England, and such a strong case for inquiry was made out that the Government agreed to appoint a Committee for the purpose. My hon. Friend (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh), then brought forward the subject of the alienation of the Crown rights of fishing in Loch Morar, and in the discussion the Scotch Members, as was acknowledged by the Government, made out a very strong case. At first the Secretary to the Treasury was inclined to minimize and to poohpooh the question, but on the matter being pressed by Scotch Members the Chancellor of the Exchequer took part in the debate, and this was his language:—

"He was inclined to think it was an extremely important question, but he doubted whether it could be conveniently referred to the same Committee that was to inquire into the general administration and business of the Woods and Forests."

That is the general Committee already granted in consequence of the representations made by the hon. Members for Northampton and Preston and others. "He would inquire as to the best means of threshing out this particular point." The Chancellor of the Exchequer further said that—

"In view of the feeling of the Committee he would undertake that no further sales of this class should take place until there had been ample inquiry; until they could see what was the proper policy to pursue."

Well, this indicates that the Government were sensible of the impression our representations had made. The Government were further pressed during the debate, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke again, when he said he was doubtful whether the same Committee which the Government would appoint to inquire into the general business arrangements of the Department of Woods and Forests, would be the best tribunal to select to inquire into the question raised by the Scotch Members, which was a matter of law in which Scotland was specially interested; and he added—

"I shall be disposed to think that a Committee to inquire into the disposal of Crown rights would be one on which Scotch Members would wish to be much more strongly represented than on a Committee to inquire into the general administration of the Crown Lands."

Immediately after the statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a Division took place. I think it was the general opinion of those who participated in the debate that the statement of the right hon. Gentleman was a reasonable one, and that the Committee, which the Government had already granted to inquire into the general question of the administration of the Department of Woods and Forests would not be a very suitable tribunal for enquiry into this very important, but peculiarly Scottish question. This was in November last year. At the beginning of this Session, in reply to a question, the Government said they intended to proceed in the appointment of the General Committee to enquire into the Administration of the Department, and on March 5, I put a question to the First Lord of the Treasury in regard to this particular question of the disposal of Crown rights in Scotland, and the right hon. Gentleman replied that the terms of reference to the proposed Committee on the Woods and Forests Department would not exclude the disposal of Crown rights in Scotland from investigation. Upon that I reminded him that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had undertaken to make a special reference on the subject, and the First Lord added that if it should appear that a special Committee was necessary the Government would not refuse it. On March 15 I secured an opportunity between 11 and 12 o'clock to call attention to this subject and was supported by several of my

colleagues. Unfortunately, there was a very limited time to discuss the subject, and it was just before 12 o'clock that the Secretary to the Treasury said in a few words it was not desirable to have a separate Committee to deal with the subject; he gave no reason for coming to that conclusion but simply announced it. Naturally, I thought we should have another opportunity of pressing our views on the Government proposal to appoint the General Committee of which I have spoken, but the Motion for the appointment of the Committee was set down for the day before the Easter Recess. We were successful in preventing the Motion being disposed of a few minutes before six o'clock, and we then asked the Secretary to the Treasury not to put it down for the first day after the holidays. Although the hon. Gentleman gave me no articulate reply we quite understood that it was agreed that the Motion should not be taken. We were then surprised to find the Government brought on the Motion just after midnight on the day of reassembling after Easter, and I think it was a little unfair that we should have been deprived of the legitimate opportunity of raising the question in which we are so much interested. If our case was strong when we raised the question last year it has become very much stronger since, and what we anticipated then has been confirmed. Not only has there been this alienation of the rights of fishing in a remote Highland loch for a very small sum, but public rights covered by the transfer have passed into the hands of private landowners on the loch side. The Secretary to the Treasury expressed a doubt as to the importance of the consequences that would ensue from the sale; but since then an action has been raised in the Court of Session to obtain an interdict preventing the people who live on the loch shores from putting boats on the loch, or navigating it, except at certain fixed points. From the report of the hearing of the case in the Court of Session, Counsel for the landed proprietors declared that his clients attached little importance to the mere fishing rights; that no salmon, indeed, were ever caught, and the trout fishing was very small. So long as the Crown held the rights, people were freely allowed the use of boats, but since the alienation of the rights, this right of traversing the lake has been taken away, and it is admitted that the object of the proprietors in purchasing the fishing rights was to keep off the inhabitants from the loch in order that portions of the adjoining land might be converted into deer forests. Last year we represented that that would be the case, and, though as a detail in the admistration of the Department of Woods and Forests, it may seem of little importance, it is really a special Scotch matter of the greatest importance. When the Secretary for Scotland Act was passed we tried to get the jurisdiction in such matters transferred to the Scotch Department, but were not successful, and this has happened, as we feared it would, the Department out of touch with the feeling of the public in Scotland has alienated public rights that have always been enjoyed. The terms of reference to the Committee may not preclude this Scotch branch of the Administration, but as we have found in the result of two such inquiries held during the last 40 years, this, by comparison, very subordinate part of the administration of the Department, will receive but little attention. As the Chancellor of the Exchequer said in November, unless we have a large proportion of Scotch Members on the Committee for the purpose, this matter, in which the Scotch people take the keenest interest, will not receive adequate investigation. We have found that the case in regard to other matters in which the Scotch part of a subject has been included in a general reference, as for instance, the subject of "Emigration" and "Town Holdings." Therefore, it is that I would earnestly press upon the Government that they should appoint a Committee, mainly or exclusively consisting of Scotch Members and examine this, to Scotland, very important subject. There are no great number of Committees sitting, and not one on Scotch matters, and we know this was to be a particularly Scotch Session. This is a matter that gives rise to the greatest interest in Scotland, and it involves large issues. We were deprived of the opportunity we were led to suppose we should have of raising the subject on the question of the appointment of the General Committee on the Department,

and I earnestly press the subject now, formally moving the reduction of the Vote.

Motion made, and Question put, "That Item A, Salaries, &c., of £17,087, be reduced by £1,000, part of the Salaries of the Commissioners."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

*MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Invernessshire): The matter has been so fully explained by my hon. Friend that I may well be brief. I had the honour of bringing forward the Motion last year, and I think we have reason to complain that the Return promised in reference to Loch Morar is not yet in our hands. As to the general question, I am sorry the Chancellor of the Exchequer is absent (I hope not intentionally), because I think his words on a previous occasion, though as they appeared in *Hansard* they do not convey so strong an impression as they made on our minds at the time, yet still are strong enough to lead to the belief that a Committee of Scottish Members such as my hon. Friend has alluded to would be appointed. The position of Crown rights of fishing in Scotland is quite distinct from that in England, and it is quite impossible for a General Committee to deal with it. I appeal to the First Lord, who was present on the former occasion and seemed to appreciate our point, that he will end the discussion by granting our request.

*MR. E. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): I have often urged an inquiry into the subject of the rights of the Crown in regard to Salmon Fisheries in Scotland, both sea and fresh water, to place the subject clear of doubt. Only last week I placed on the Paper a Motion for a Return stating each case where the right of salmon fishing, in the sea or off the coast of Scotland, is held under lease from the Crown, showing the rent paid and the distance the right extends in the sea; a statement of the cases where the rights have been sold, with the dates of sale, and the sum paid in each sale since the transfer of the right from the Office of Woods and Forests. That Return was refused on the ground that the greater part of the information had been given in Parliamentary Paper 175 of 1886. It is true that in this Paper there is a list of cases in which the Woods and Forest Department have dealt with rights in salmon fishing between the years 1851 and 1884, but it does not at all give the information I want. It does not give the original dates when the sales were made or leases granted nor the gradual increment in the rent which I know very well has taken place in these salmon fishings from year to year. Further, this list is a very long one, containing a number of salmon fisheries of the smallest character, cases where there were no rights to part with, and where there are no salmon to come up the river; and it does not make a distinction between salmon fisheries in the sea and salmon fisheries in fresh water, and it is as to salmon fisheries in the sea that I chiefly wish to obtain distinct information of the rights the Woods and Forests Office claim to have. The effect of the present arrangement is that the Scotch fishermen all round the coast of Scotland are precluded from taking the salmon in the sea. That is not the case either in England or Ireland, the fishermen being at liberty to catch salmon in the sea by means of moveable machines. The Scotch fishermen feel this to be a very great hardship, and it has been the cause of great disturbances off the coast of Berwickshire. In grants and leases of these rights made up to 1880, the rights were restricted to the three-mile limit—that is to say, to the territorial waters. Since 1880, however, the conveyances have not contained any words of limitation. Will the Secretary to the Treasury explain this? Have they become doubtful of the rights they granted within the territorial waters, or do they claim still more extensive ones? If it is only within the territorial waters that they claim these rights, why do they not say so? My own belief is that the Crown has never exercised any right of taking salmon in the sea except by means of engines fixed to the shore, and I hold that by the practice of centuries these rights are limited to such modes of fishing as are carried on in connection with the land. I trust the Secretary to the Treasury will inform us distinctly how far the Crown claim that their rights extend—whether it is intended to convey rights beyond the territorial waters of the three mile limit, or only within one mile or two miles. I would press this

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question, and would also press for a change of decision with regard to the Return for which I have asked. I do not think it at all unreasonable to ask for it, or that it would be at all difficult to prepare it.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I do not think the Secretary to the Treasury, or even the First Lord of the Treasury, can answer the question as to the rights of the Crown to salmon in the sea. I do hope, however, the Government will seriously consider, before refusing the Committee so reasonably asked for by the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), in order to inquire into this matter. It is a very important and difficult matter, in regard to which a large portion of the people of Scotland feel very keenly. The case of Loch Morar is only a striking example of the manner in which the Crown rights have been alienated from the people, and it shows either criminal negligence or crass ignorance of these matters. This case is only one instance of what is going on all round the coasts of Scotland, and I believe that when the day comes to inquire into the subject, it will be found that the Crown has no right to alienate these rights. The subject is not only important and difficult, but it is also a very old one. Allusion has been made to the considerable disturbances which have occurred among the people on account of this practice. I am sorry to say that in this world of ours people do not often get redress for their grievances until disturbances break out and people's heads are broken. Unfortunately, the fishing industry on the coast of Scotland is now in a depressed condition. I hear gloomy accounts of the men who have have hitherto been engaged in it. It is said that they are emigrating to other parts of the world, because they are discontented at the way in which they have been treated by the Representatives of Her Majesty's Government—the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. Scotch Law on this subject stands on a totally different footing from English Law, and we cannot expect a general Committee of this kind to deal thoroughly with grievances which are peculiar to Scotland. I hope the Government will accede to the reasonable request of my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh, who only asks for a Committee to be appointed to inquire specially into the matter.

*MR. JACKSON: I am afraid the answer of the Government to the hon. Member for West Edinburgh will not satisfy him, because I believe that the decision has already been announced, to which we feel we must abide. The Government have agreed to appoint a Commitee to inquire into the general administration of the Department of Woods and Forest; and, as I have already said, this question will not be excluded from consideration. I may go further, and say that whatever Member representing Scotland is on the Committee, he will take care that it is included in the inquiry of the Committee. The Government have further agreed, at the request of hon. Members opposite, that no further action shall be taken in regard to the leasing or sale of these salmon fisheries in Scotland until the inquiry by the Committee has taken place. As far as I know, it is not contended on the part of hon. Members that that promise will be otherwise than fulfilled. Therefore no harm can arise until some further action is taken, and no action can be taken until after the inquiry has been completed. I do not deny that the question is in itself an important question, but there are other questions of right to consider, and no right will be prejudiced by any action taken by the Woods and Forests. If it is found that the Committee are unable to conduct the inquiry fully and completely, then further steps may be taken. But my contention is that the Committee will be found perfectly competent to deal with the matter, so I believe it will be found that they will deal with it in a satisfactory manner. I hope, therefore, that the hon. Member will not press his objection, but will wait and see what the result of the investigation by the Committee is. I think that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire, has taken a little too seriously my refusal to grant the return for which he asked. So far as my recollection goes, the right hon. Gentleman spoke to me on the subject, and after making inquiry I was informed that the whole of the information was already in print, and had been given to the House. I may say at once that if the right hon. Gentleman,

after having looked into the information already before the House, still thinks that this return would be useful to the Scotch Members, or to the House generally, I am perfectly willing that he should have it. I had no desire to refuse the information, but simply to prevent the duplication of returns. The right hon. Gentleman referred to a change in the practice of dealing with leases, and the sale of the Crown rights in Scotland. He asked me to say what I think of the change, and also to define the limits of the Crown rights. I am quite sure that he will not expect me to enter into questions which contain so many elements of law, and especially of Scotch Law. I understand that in 1880 some question was raised as to whether a particular limit was the right limit, as previously defined, namely the three mile limit and a doubt was raised as to whether the rights of the Crown did not extend to even beyond three miles. Since then in dealing with leases and sales, no particular limit of distance has been described, but the Woods and Forests have simply handed over the rights they possess. The question of the rights of the Crown is left in precisely the position in which it stood before, and it would be presumptuous on my part to attempt to define what those rights are. As the Government have appointed a Committee, I do not think this is the time to raise any question as to particular points of detail, but hon. Members should wait until the inquiry of the Committee is completed, or until it is proved conclusively that the Committee is incompetent to deal with the question.

*MR. MARJORIBANKS: I must acknowledge the great courtesy which the hon. Gentleman always observes, and I am prepared to accept his offer and to say that I do think this Return would be of great use and value. As to the question of the Crown rights in the sea, it is one which is not easily disposed of. What I desire is to obtain for the fishermen of Scotland power to catch fish in the sea. If it is the case that the Crown rights in the sea are of this extensive character, there is no necessity for any Act of Parliament whatever to make the fishermen enjoy the privilege of catching salmon. Nothing could be easier than to make arrangements by which the fishermen of any district could take out a license from the Woods and Forests, giving them the right of fishing within a defined distance of the shore. If the Crown rights are so extensive they should not be confined to one class of people who employ engines for catching salmon along the shore, but the sea should be opened to fishermen generally. With proper regulations as to close time and methods of capture, they ought to be able to catch salmon in the sea with the permission and under the direct sanction of the Crown. I hope that that point will receive the attention of the hon. Gentleman and also of the Office of Woods and Forests.

MR. A. ELLIOT (Roxburghshire): The rights claimed by the Crown in respect to salmon in Scotland are of a much more extensive character than in England, and the way in which they have been dealt with has given rise to very great discontent. There has also been a disposition to question the legality of the rights claimed by private individuals. I hope it will be distinctly laid down, when this Committee is appointed, that it shall be their duty to inquire into the whole of the circumstances of the Crown rights in Scotland. It would be more satisfactory to the Scotch Members if a Committee, substantially Scotch, had been appointed to inquire into the question, and that it was not to be regarded merely as a matter of detail by a Committee appointed to inquire into the general management of the affairs of Scotland. As that has not been provided for by the Government, we think the Government ought to put in the terms of reference that it is the business of the Committee to inquire into these rights which now, to a great extent, are private rights, and which are maintained or sanctioned by Charter from the Crown. I can assure Her Majesty's Ministers that the matter is one which is of very great interest to the people of Scotland.

*MR. SHIRESS WILL (Montrose, Burghs): I join with the right hon. Member for Berwickshire in thanking the Secretary to the Treasury for promising a Return showing the extent of the alleged Crown rights. The case is much stronger now than it was last year for a Special Committee on the subject. The Return promised by the Secretary to the Trea-

sury is not sufficient now for clearing up the cause of complaint. It has now come to light that the Crown from time to time has put forward a sort of cloudy claim to the right to take salmon in the sea—sometimes to the extent of three miles out at sea, and sometimes to a less extent. It appears now that that claim has been withdrawn so far as regards any leases which are made now.

*Mr. JACKSON: I did not say that it had been withdrawn. I said that it had not been inserted in the leases.

*Mr. S. WILL: That means very much the same thing. The claim has ceased to be inserted, and the reason is this: that the hon. Gentleman thinks the Crown may have a right extending still further at sea than three miles. I maintain that this is a cloudy claim, and it is rendered still more cloudy by this action on the part of the Crown. How is it to be cleared up? Suppose we have a Return; what will it show? It will show the very few instances in which the Crown has asserted any such right. It will teach us nothing as to the origin of the alleged right of the Crown. It will go no length whatever in showing us what the foundation of the claim really is. The three-mile limit is a limit which exists for a totally different purpose. It is not for the purpose of defining any right of the Crown in the territory, the soil, or the fish; but it was simply the limit of jurisdiction in relation to Foreign Powers. I sincerely trust that the question will be made the subject of inquirv by a Special Committee. It rests upon entirely different considerations from any similar question in England. It is quite true that the Crown have agreed to hold their hand pending a general inquiry; but as to this right, the contention of the Scotch Members is that the Crown has no right to sell or dispose of fisheries which are vested in it simply as trustees of the public. Of late years, the Office of Woods and Forests have been selling these rights here, there, and everywhere. The matter is a special one, and should not be mixed up in any degree with the general inquiry which is about to be entered into by the Committee. I hope that my right hon. Friend who moved the Motion will take a Division upon it, to see if the Government are really in earnest in insisting upon handing over these special matters to the Committee which is to undertake a general inquiry into the administration of the Office of Woods and Forests.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I have always admired the manner in which the Secretary to the Treasury replies to any question that is raised, especially by Scotch Members. It demonstrates to my mind the great superiority of the Yorkshire over the Scotch character. When I listened to his first speech, I noticed in it a studied inability to understand the point that was put before him. But when my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Montrose (Mr. S. Will) talked about the claim of the Crown being withdrawn, the hon. Gentleman fully appreciated the point, and was ready enough to say that it had not been withdrawn, but had ceased to be inserted in the lease. The hon. Gentleman disarms suspicion in that way, but he could not have made his speech without knowing the reasonableness of the point urged by my hon. Friend. He said that he would not venture to discuss questions of law, and especially questions of Scotch Law, but he ignored altogether the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who said explicitly that this question could not be conveniently referred to the same Committee that was to inquire into the administration of the Woods and Forests; that Scotch questions were peculiar, and could not possibly be dealt with by that Committee. Probably, when the Committee is appointed, the Secretary to the Treasury will be the Chairman. I can imagine the hon. Gentleman examining Scotch witnesses and drafting his Report upon questions of foreshore rights and such things as "Bishops' teams." I should like to know what his idea of "Bishops' teams" is? The notion that there will be one or two Scotch Members upon the Committee is preposterous. Any one likely to interest himself in Scotch questions would be carefully excluded from the Committee, and the consequence will be that the matter will be most unsatisfactorily dealt with. I see, Mr. Courtney, from the expression on your countenance, that you are of opinion that I am wandering from the subject, and therefore I will merely say that I entirely support the views of my hon.

Friend the Member for West Edinburgh, and I hope the Secretary to the Treasury will see the desirability of re-considering his determination.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeenshire, E.): I desire to express my satisfaction that the Scotch fishery questions are, and have been, during the past year receiving a little consideration, and I wish to impress upon the Secretary to the Treasury and the Lord Advocate the very strong amount of feeling which exists in Scotland with regard to the uncertainty of the law in reference to the catching of salmon. It is a subject which has been brought under the attention of the Government almost from time immemorial, and I wish to emphasize the feeling expressed by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Montrose that the Committee must be required to take a wider scope before it would be able to settle this very intricate and difficult, although at the same time interesting question. There is another matter to which I also wish to call attention. We were exceedingly obliged to the Government for giving us a Commission upon the mussel beds. That Commission has completed its inquiry, and made its Report, but as yet we have had no indication whether anything is going to be done in reference to that Report. I should like to know from the Lord Advocate what the views of the Government are in regard to it, and whether any action is to be taken upon it. Seeing that the fishing industry is of more value to the country than the whole of the agricultural interest, we ought to receive some intimation from the Government that these important questions are engaging their attention.

*MR. BARCLAY (Forfarshire): I regret very much the decision at which the Government have arrived. Although the declaration in the Autumn Session was not made in so many words, it was certainly understood that the inquiry would be a special one. They have kept the promise to the letter, but cannot be said to have kept it in the spirit. The inquiry they are prepared to concede is to be of a very limited character, referring only to the administration of the Woods and Forests. We desire to go a little further, and to deal with the policy of the Woods and Forests in alienating the Crown rights to the Salmon Fisheries. The question is one of policy, and I am afraid that under the terms of the reference such questions will be excluded. We ought to have a Committee specially appointed to inquire into the subject. I can assure the Government that the question is assuming very great importance among the people of Scotland. The Crown lessees assert vague claims as to the right of salmon fishing in the sea, and I think we are entitled to have a declaration from the Woods and Forests as to what the rights of the Crown are. They do not declare what the Crown rights are, and if the fishermen, in the assertion of the rights they claim, get into conflict with the lessees of the Crown the Government will be greatly to blame for any serious consequences which may follow. Do the Woods and Forests claim that they have a right to all the salmon in the sea? A question of great interest to the public is at issue, quite apart from the claims of the fishermen. The fishermen are beginning to find out that they can catch salmon at a considerable distance from the shore without using the fixed engines formerly employed. If the Crown prevent them from catching salmon in this manner, they are playing the part of the dog in the manger. I think the Government would relieve themselves of a considerable difficulty if they would consent to the appointment of a Committee specially to investigate this question.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I desire to say a few words before the debate proceeds further. I think the Committee have hardly realized the engagements under which the Government have come in this matter. The Government have distinctly undertaken that no alienation of Crown rights in regard to salmon fishing will be made until the matter has been inquired into and a determination arrived at. Pending that inquiry, therefore, there can be no damage to the public of Scotland by the action of the Woods and Forests. The Government, being asked from other quarters, have granted a Committee to inquire into the administration of the Woods and Forests, and it will be impossible to exclude from such an inquiry a question relating to a very important part of the functions of that Department in Scotland—namely, the dealing with Crown rights of fishing.

It would also be inconvenient that two Committees dealing with the Woods and Forests should be sitting upstairs at the same time. The Government having undertaken that there shall be no damage whatever to the public pending that inquiry, I hope hon. Members will allow it to proceed, and if it appears in the course of the inquiry that the Committee cannot conduct it satisfactorily or decline to go into all the question hon. Gentlemen desire, it will then be fitting that hon. Gentlemen should come to the House and ask for another Committee. To have an inquiry going on *pari passu* with another inquiry into the administration of the Woods and Forests is an arrangement which I think would not be satisfactory even to the people of Scotland themselves. The hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Esslemont) has referred to the Report of the Commission presided over by the right hon. Member for Berwickshire. That Report was only presented in March. I trust that the hon. Gentleman will see that the Government are fully alive to the question, and are desirous that there should be no loss of time.

SIR G. O. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): The most satisfactory part of the utterances which have been made from the Treasury Bench in the course of this discussion is the assurance which has been given that no more grants, either by lease or by sale, will be made until there has been an inquiry.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: What I said was that we would abstain from putting forward any right pending the decision of the Committee.

SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: The readiness with which the Government have conceded that point shows the perfect reasonableness of the concession, and the satisfaction with which it has been received is a proof of the unreasonableness of the action of the Woods and Forests in Scotch matters in the past. I trust that the Committee which is going to be appointed to inquire into the Woods and Forests will, both in the scope of its inquiry and the personal constitution of the Committee, be qualified to investigate whether the officers of the Scotch Office should not be responsible henceforward for the management of the Woods and Forests in Scotland. In old days I knew nothing more unsatisfactory than the relation of the Woods and Forests to the Scotch Members. In those days I had occasion to apply to the Woods and Forests in regard to this fishery question—a question which in Scotland attracts a large amount of interest—and I must say the feeling of the people is that they are not safe in the hands of the Woods and Forests. I quite see from the tone of the debate that a great change has been brought about by the outspoken conduct of the Scotch Members in this House, and the manner in which public opinion has been brought to bear upon the conduct of the Government. It is plain that in this case a blunder has been committed by the Woods and Forests. It is confessed to be a blunder by the promise which has been made by the Government that nothing of the same sort shall occur again until there has been full inquiry. Such a blunder could not have been committed if the Woods and Forests had been a Scotch Department—in touch with the Scotch people. I earnestly trust that the question of the control of the woods and forests will be brought before the Committee now about to sit, and, if so, I fancy it will be decided that a change is necessary.

*MR. S. WILLIAMSON (Kilmarnock Burghs): I am quite sure that this public question of the right of fishermen to catch salmon in the sea is one that deserves special inquiry. The First Lord of the Treasury has said that a Committee will be appointed to inquire into the matter, and that in the meantime the fishermen will not be prejudiced in the exercise of their rights. "In the meantime," the right hon. Gentleman says. But the men are prejudiced at this moment, seeing that while there is a penalty attached to the catching of salmon within a limit of one mile from the shore, and none outside of that limit, they are yet prohibited from catching salmon outside of this one mile limit. I hope the whole question will be discussed on Tuesday next on the Motion of the right hon. Member for Berwickshire. I am perfectly sure that the people of Scotland will not be satisfied to have this burning question remitted to a large General Committee, which is to inquire principally into the administration of the Woods and Forests. They will not be satisfied unless they get the appointment of a Committee or a Commission to deal with the subject specially.

*MR. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrews, Burghs): I wish to take this opportunity of endorsing the remarks which have been made by hon. Members on this side of the House. At the same time, I would like to suggest to the Secretary to the Treasury that if he has finally made up his mind that he cannot grant this second Committee asked for by hon. Members representing Scotland in this House, he may be willing, perhaps, to take into consideration a proposal that there should be a Commission similar to that presided over by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire last autumn to inquire into the question of the mussel beds. Such a Commission might inquire into the rights of the Crown and their title to the salmon fishing in the territorial waters upon the Scottish coasts.

*MR. BARCLAY: I would earnestly support the suggestion of my hon. Friend. The statement of the First Lord of the Treasury is quite satisfactory that no further leases or sale will be made until the Committee shall have reported; but the Committee which has been appointed will not deal with the other important question respecting the extent of the rights of the Crown to the salmon fishing in the sea. It would, therefore, be extremely useful to have a Commission to inquire into the present method, and also as to the possibility of catching salmon in the sea without fixed engines. If the right hon. Gentleman will agree to the appointment of a small Commission, I am quite sure the Scotch Members will be satisfied to await the result of the investigation. I do not see how the question can be otherwise decided except by an expensive litigation. As the fishermen have no means to enable them to carry on a litigation, of course they will press upon their Representatives the hardships to which they are subjected. Certainly the right of catching fish in the open sea would seem to be the natural right of all fishermen, and so it is held in England, subject to municipal regulations. The people of Scotland cannot understand why there should be any difference between the law of the two countries.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: There is a Motion standing on the Paper for Tuesday next in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire, and it raises, I think, the whole question which hon. Members opposite desire to raise. I can only repeat the assurance I have already given that if hon. Gentlemen will allow the question to stand over, at all events until the Committee has shown whether it can deal with the subject or not, an inquiry shall be made specially if the Committee finds that it is unable to entertain the matter.

*MR. BUCHANAN: I should like to hear from the right hon. Gentleman what is to be the scope of the inquiry he proposes by means of the promised Committee, and unless I receive a satisfactory reply, I do not think I shall be justified in withdrawing my Amendment.

*SIR G. CAMPBELL: Are we to understand that the Government will, next Tuesday, give us an answer as to what it is they propose to do? If not, we must take a Division.

MR. CALDWELL (St. Rollox): I must express my regret that the Government do not see their way to grant the almost unanimous wish of the Scotch Members—namely, that they shall have a Special Committee to consider this question, which is one purely relating to Scotland. It is notorious that the law of Scotland is a matter of difficulty in regard to questions of this kind, and that the rights which exists in England and Scotland are so widely different that English lawyers would not consent to sit on a Committee on a purely technical question based on Scotch Law. What is wanted is that the inquiry should be conducted by a Committee composed mainly of Scotch Members, and the Government have given no distinct reason for refusing this request, although they have undertaken that no new leases shall be granted until the question is disposed of by the Committee. The question is, what Committee will the Government give us? It is of the utmost importance that that Committee should have the confidence of the Scottish people. There can be no reason to suppose that a Committee of Scotch Members would look at the matter from a Party point of view, or would unduly take away the rights of any set of individuals; and I think we have a right to ask that a question of this kind should be delegated to those who have some knowledge of the Scotch Law.

The Committee divided :—Ayes 148 ; Noes 218.—(Div. List, No. 112.)

Original question again proposed.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth) : I wish to introduce to the notice of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen the Irish part of the question. I find, looking at the salaries, £1,135 for the Woods and Forests Commissioners in Ireland, and I should like to ask right hon. Gentlemen opposite whether they are acquainted with the duties which those officers in Ireland have to discharge. I want to know whether the officers of the Woods and Forests Commissioners are charged with protecting the rights of the people, because I am inclined to think, from what I have seen myself, that they do not discharge this duty. Take the right of sailing on a lake. I have seen, in one instance, a lake consisting of two parts, the upper and the lower. The upper part was very small and very uninteresting, and that was the only part to which the common people had access. The lower part was large, picturesque, and interesting to a very great degree. Now, the great landlord who possessed the right of access to the lower part of the lake, drew a rope across the narrow creek which connected the two parts, and by this means kept the boats of the ordinary people from sailing on the lower part. And I have seen myself that the boats——

The CHAIRMAN : The hon. Member is not directing his observations to this Vote.

Mr. NOLAN : I understood from the discussion which took place that the Commissioners of Woods and Forests had charge of the lakes.

The CHAIRMAN : The Commissioners of Woods and Forests have charge of Crown properties. It may possibly be that a lake is Crown property.

Mr. NOLAN : The fishing as well as sailing? ["No."] Well then, Sir, as regards Woods and Forests, this is a matter which has very considerable interest to the people of Ireland, particularly at a time when employment is wanted.

The CHAIRMAN : The hon. Member is not touching the elements of the Vote. This is a Vote for the Commissioners having charge of Crown property.

Mr. NOLAN : Unless I am misinformed, the remarks I am making with regard to the mountain and forest lands of Ireland appertain to this Vote, because I am credibly informed that if they are not Crown property it arises from the fault of the Office. [*Laughter.*] Yes, the office of Woods and Forests, which fails to preserve the rights of the Crown. But I will postpone my remarks with reference to Woods and Forests, not that I am entirely convinced I am wrong in thinking that they are connected with this Vote. I find by the Vote that there is a certain amount for mineralogists, and I infer from this that the mines of Ireland are connected with this Vote.

The CHAIRMAN : I have already explained that this has reference to the charge of Crown properties, and the hon. Member's observations must be directed to mines in the charge of the Crown Office.

Mr. NOLAN : Very well, Mr. Courtney, I will reserve my remarks on this for some other occasion, and content myself at present with asking one of the representatives of the Government what are the functions discharged by the Irish Office in connection with Woods and Forests?

*Mr. JACKSON : The functions discharged by the Staff in Ireland are very simple. They are, to look after the Crown rights, which in Ireland consist, mainly, of quit rents. There is a Central Office in Dublin, as the right hon. Gentleman will see on referring to his Estimates. The collection is made by the Inland Revenue.

Mr. MOLLOY (Birr, King's Co.) : There are one or two observations which I wish to make on this Vote. I should like to ask the hon. Gentleman what kind of decision, if any, has the Government come to with regard to the Royalties they are going to charge on minerals under Crown lands in Ireland. Several who were interested in a mining property, and were going to develop it, especially in connection with gold mines, are actually going to withdraw from the whole concern, in consequence of the exorbitant demands made by the Government. The amount asked by the Government as Royalty for these Crown lands is 5 per cent, or one-twentieth of the gross produce of the mines. Under such conditions as that it is impossible for any mineral pro-

perty in the world to be developed. In Australia, and in America, and in all great gold bearing countries, all those Royalties which were imposed at the beginning have been utterly done away with, and they find it in the interest of the country and the development of the property that no Royalties should be charged. Well, now, it is a very hard thing that just as a considerable amount of capital is about to be invested in these mines in Ireland, the Government impose a tax which prohibits any further action being taken. Of my own knowledge, I know of one case where some 20 square miles granted by the Crown were abandoned owing to the extortionate and exceedingly foolish demands of the Government. Five per cent, or one-tenth of the gold that comes out of the mine, is, so far as I can calculate, about 18 per cent or one-twentieth of a man's working in the different quarries. What can be object of the Government in asking for this enormous tax? You are constantly telling people outside this House that your aim is to promote the industries of Ireland, and you have killed this industry. You have only one mine working in Scotland at the present time, and only one in Wales; and here in Ireland, just as capital is about to be invested, you propose this stupid tax, as it seems to me, upon it. Now why should you do this in Wales and in Ireland, when in every other country in the world these taxes have been done away with? The only condition attached to it beyond that is that they must be worked. Now, the First Lord of the Treasury is present, and I will ask him whether it is in the interest of the Government or of Ireland or Wales to uphold a tax which prohibits the development of industry. It is a curious thing that you have paid away in law expenses under this Vote a sum of £11,535 in the year. What is the use of our discussing this question every year if no attention is paid to us? The question of Royalties was brought forward two years ago, and on the last occasion a promise was given me that the matter should be looked into; yet nothing has been done. I will ask the First Lord of the Treasury to say whether or not, as these two taxes bring absolutely nothing into the Treasury, and as they only stop the development of property, it is worth while keeping them up. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said he did not see why the middleman should make money out of the mines; that if the leases were granted to him he would make considerable sums. But this kind of grandmotherly legislation is of no use. How can you expect a man to spend money in sinking shafts in order to discover where gold is to be found, unless he has some prospect of making money out of it? I hope the First Lord of the Treasury will abolish a tax, the imposition of which prevents the development of property and the introduction of capital into the country.

*MR. PRITCHARD MORGAN (Merthyr Tydfil): I should not be doing my duty to Wales if I allowed this Vote to pass without making one or two observations. I think the Woods and Forests Office is conducted in a manner which shows a great want of knowledge on the subjects which it has to handle, and more especially the subject of Royalties. In no other country in the world do such charges exist as these which are imposed upon those desirous of opening up industries in Wales. Take, for instance, my own position. I am at the present moment defending an action which has been brought by the Woods and Forests Department against me to prevent me digging a hole in my own freehold land. The Office practically says, "We are entitled to all the gold you obtain from your land, and unless you give us an exorbitant amount of the gold and silver you obtain, you shall not work there at all." It is well known to men interested in mining that the slightest possible charge will stifle the energy of the enterprise. Take, for instance, the colony of Victoria. There they found 3s. an ounce shut up about 50 per cent of the mines in that colony. The tax was entirely abolished in deference to public opinion. In America, Australia, and in every part of the world, men are entitled to work the mines by paying a nominal amount to the authorities. But it is not so here. The fact is the amount received by the Treasury as Royalties on gold and silver was infinitesimal until this industry was opened up by me. I believe the British Government received 11d. by way of Royalties on gold obtained on private land in the United Kingdom. But I

have paid in one year—including duty on the transfer of a property, the rent of which was £70 a year—I have, I say, paid for working one adit a sum amounting to nearly £2,300. I say this is an unjust and unfair tax on what promises to be an important industry. I know perfectly well that hon. Members opposite have Conservative opinions as to the sacred rights of property, and I know I have been accused of wanting to rob the country by taking gold out of it and paying no royalty. But we cannot work any land unless we go hat in hand to this Office and ask them respectfully whether they will kindly allow us to dig a hole in the land we have bought and paid for. This is no Party question. I want and am willing to pay a Royalty, but it must be in proportion of the profits which I derive from the undertaking and a fair proportion of the product of the land. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in answer to a pertinent question I put to him, was good enough to sneer at what I have done, but if one mine afforded for one adit, worked one year, a sum of £2,200 or £2,300 to the State, and if, as I say unhesitatingly there are hundreds of properties in Wales and a large area in Ireland where similar mines could be profitably opened up, I think this opens up a scheme which might be of great advantage to the country. I have the greatest respect for the Gentlemen who administer the Woods and Forests Department, and they are possibly fitted to occupy important positions under the Crown, but I firmly believe there is not one man in this Woods and Forests Office who has ever seen a gold or silver mine in his life. It is the duty of the House to carefully consider this matter, and to give a chance to the development of so important an industry as that to which I have referred. I may be charged with having an interest in this matter. But before I presumed to get up and speak upon it in this House I surrendered all my Crown leases to the Crown, declining to work for so unjust and unfair a landlord. And so I have lost what little money I have expended in the development of this land, for I shall not be foolish enough to work under these conditions, neither will anyone else who has any knowledge on the subject. Let me for the sake of argument take a mine—gold, silver, or copper. If it costs 10s. to raise it and 10s. to treat metal worth 17s. 6d., you cannot, of course, carry on the industry at a profit. But you must remove that ore in order to see if there is better underneath; yet, while you are trying the experiment and working at a loss of 2s. 6d. per ton, the Woods and Forests Office steps in and makes you pay this Royalty, although you have been giving employment to a large number of men, and are working at a loss. I say that that is most unfair. Now, I repeat that this is not a Party matter; I do not move a reduction of the Vote for the mere purpose of lowering the salary of anybody. I should rather see them raised, for I do not believe that people get over-paid in this world. But take the position of my ground landlord in reference to a particular mine of my own. We have worked the mine for a period of one year and have got out no less than 5,300 tons of ore which has produced nearly half-a-ton of solid gold. Surely if that is the result of working one little mine for a year, the industry is one worth considering, my landlord was satisfied with a Royalty of one-fortieth, as a consideration for the lease. But then he discovered that he had no right to it, and the Crown stepped in and claimed a Royalty of one-thirtieth, with the result that this man might possibly have been ruined. I did not care about ruining him, for people in Wales are no more amiable if you insist on ruining them than they are in Ireland. I, at any rate, thought discretion the better part of valour, and therefore undertook to pay the Royalties to the Crown myself. I trust that now I have called the attention of the House to this matter, and considering that the Government have been good enough to consent to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the question of Royalties generally, this point will no longer be overlooked. It is my solemn conviction that in the near future we shall be producing in this country large quantities of gold, silver, lead, and copper, and I submit that the Government has no right to stand between the labourers, who will thus secure employment, and their industry. I would suggest that the Government should charge no Royalty whatever on gold or silver obtained in this country for a period of three years

from this time. I believe that would let loose a hundred thousand pounds capital for the development of this industry in Wales and in Ireland. I do not want to get rid of the liability to pay Royalties to the Crown. From the day I first discovered gold, I urged on the Woods and Forests Department, that they should insist on their rights, but I believe as the law now stands, although they may claim Royalties, they have no right to enter on the land to search for gold, for that would render them liable to an action for trespass. The first instance of a Royalty was when Joseph went down to that portion of the land of Egypt the name of which I have no right to mention in this House. He there created a corner in corn, and, having done a very smart thing in that direction, the people came round him and gave him their cattle and sheep, their flocks and herds, in return for corn. The following year the people again came to Joseph for more corn. Joseph, if I remember rightly, asked what they had to give him. They said they had nothing but land, so Joseph took the land, and then he had the whole bag of tricks in his hand, and was in a position stronger than that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

It being ten minutes to seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEE) (SPECIAL REPORT).

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection have leave to make a Special Report.

Sir John Mowbray accordingly reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, viz., Sir John Lubbock; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Barnes.

Sir John Mowbray further reported; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures Bill, viz., Mr. Coddington; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Elliott Lees.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MOTION.

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THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH IN WALES.

*MR. DILLWYN (Swansea): Mr. Speaker, the Church of England was established by the State to provide religious instruction and religious administrations for the people of this country. It extended its operations to Wales as well as to England, and it created machinery for carrying on its operations. It calls itself the National Church, but it seems to me that in order to warrant the assumption of such a position it should include within its fold the great bulk of the people of the country in which it is established. Considering its internal dissensions, and having regard to the fact that great numbers of people have withdrawn from it, I very much doubt whether it can claim that title even in England; but whatever may be the case in England, it is quite clear that the Church has no claim to the title in Wales. So far from the bulk of the people of Wales belonging to the Church of England the majority, the overwhelming majority, of the population are decidedly opposed to it. It is an offence to the people, and it deserves to be so. In its early days the Church had a free hand in Wales; it had no opposition and was enabled to do pretty much as it liked, and it signally and disgracefully failed to perform the functions allotted to it. There were four dioceses in Wales, and a great number of the incumbencies were in the hands of the Bishops, and others were in the hands of the great families of this country. Instead, however, of seeking to evangelize or to teach the people religion the clergymen of the Church appeared to have had but one object in view, and that was to make as much money as they could. The Bishops appointed their own relatives and friends to the incumbencies. Many of them never went near their dioceses but appointed curates, many of whom were men of very indifferent character. In many

instances the Church in Wales seemed to be viewed as a fit institution to send into the black sheep of great families. The clergy were immoral men and drunkards and they altogether failed in their duty; they, indeed, taught the people evil instead of good. We have very little time to discuss this question to-night, and therefore I shall abridge my remarks as much as possible. I shall for instance use very few quotations, but I must use these in order to show that I am not over-stating the case with regard to the conduct of the Welsh clergy. I have here a quotation from *The Visitation* of Dr. Bailey, the Bishop of Bangor, in 1623. With regard to Llandisilio, he tells us "there have been but two sermons here in the last twelve months." With regard to the parish of Llandensant, he says:—

"The curate here is presented for not reading service in due time and for not reading of homilies and for not registering christenings, weddings, and burials. They had but three sermons here since last Whitsuntide twelvemonth. The said curate is presented for haunting of alehouses for being often overseen in drink; also for omitting to read the Litany most commonly, and also for brawling and quarreling with his parishioners and others."

Here is another quotation with respect to Aberdaron:—

"Sir Griffith Piers, vicar, is presented. A dead child of Hugh Thomas lay unburied from Saturday to Sunday, for that the vicar could not be found to bury the same. Also that the said vicar came to read prayers upon a Sunday, and was not well, but seemed to be overseen by drink, and after the evening prayer went to the alehouse. Also that the said vicar being warned upon Saturday to come and bury one upon Sunday did not come at all neither to bury the dead nor to read service here that day."

Here is another. Hon. Members, what is the date? From 1602 to 1642. [*Ministerial ironical cheers*]. We shall have something to say about the present state of things. The Rev. R. Pritchard, himself a clergyman, writes:—

"Licentiousness, drunkenness, dishonesty, falsehood, and infidelity, are rampant through the Principality; Judges and juries sympathize with drunken murderers, and permit extortioners to rob widows and orphans. Sheriffs and their deputies plunder innocent people by virtue of their offices. The Lord's day is a day for drunkenness, dancing, idleness, and wanton lewdness among the Welsh."

In the middle of the eighteenth century, the Rev. Mr. Charles writes:—

"In those days the land was dark indeed. Hardly any of the lower ranks could read at all. The morals of the country were very corrupt, and in this respect there was no difference between gentle and simple, laymen and clergymen; sluttony, drunkenness and licentousness prevailed throughout the whole country."

Under these circumstances it is hardly to be wondered at that the Welsh first of all lost all sense of religion or nearly so, and in the second place lost all confidence and trust in the Church, which had so misused its advantages. There were, no doubt, in the English Church some earnest, honest men, who were shocked at the state of things throughout Wales and endeavoured to awaken the country to a better condition, but so far from being supported by their fellows, their good lives being a reproach to the evil doers, they were persecuted and driven out of the Church, by the Church itself. It is true there has been great reform in the Church of late years. Early in this century there were no clergymen who understood the language of the people, but some few years ago the Church awakened to its duties, and endeavoured to recover its position in some respects. Men were appointed to incumbencies who understood Welsh, and the clergy were more moral and better than they had been in the early days. In its early days the Welsh Church was little better than a happy hunting ground for immoral and corrupt men, men who were ashamed to live in their own country. Now it has become much better and it endeavours to fulfil its duty. But it is too late. It is not now a National Church. If it exists at all it is as a proselytizing Church. That is an additional grievance, because the great territorial influences in Wales are for the most part Church influences, and the people are often constrained to conform to the religion of their landlords. The fact that all the influence of landlords and of most of the employers is exerted to induce people to declare themselves Churchmen, considerably embitters the feeling against the Church in Wales. It is said that the Church people in Wales are gaining ground, but I do not think anybody will say they are in a majority. I doubt whether the hon. Members for Welsh constituencies, who may vote against this Motion, if there are any, will assert so much as that. It is admitted on all hands that the

Nonconformists in Wales are in an overwhelming majority. There has been no regular religious census taken; indeed, if one were attempted it would only lead to inquisition and persecution on the part of the landed proprietors, who have great influence, and who would not fail to exercise it. But I have here figures which have been compiled by a gentleman upon whom I can implicitly rely. According to his calculation the average attendance lately at churches and chapels in North Wales has been:—At Churches 86,438, at Chapels 317,078, or a difference in favour of the Chapels of 230,640. The return for South Wales has not been so fully made up, but I believe the following figures may be taken as substantially correct:—At Churches 78,195, at Chapels 423,077, or a difference in favour of the Chapels of 344,882. The attendances at Church Sunday Schools in North Wales have been lately 25,083, while those at Chapel Sunday Schools have been 135,522; in South Wales 22,842 in Church Schools, and 155,180 in Chapel Schools. In North Wales, therefore, the attendances are in proportion of seven at Chapels to two at Churches, and in South Wales of seven at Chapels to one in Churches, and no one can doubt that Nonconformity is the religion of Wales. One evidence of the feeling of Wales with regard to Dissent *versus* Church, is its Parliamentary representation. We know very well there is little chance of any man being returned as a representative of a Welsh constituency who is not in favour of the Disestablishment of the Church. The Welsh are strongly in favour of Disestablishment, and they are now putting forward their demand with great earnestness and determination. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the feeling against the Church is increasing in bitterness and strength. What are the tithe riots of which we have heard so much? I do not suppose the Welsh like imposts of any sort any more than other people, but I do not believe they would object to the payment of tithes so much as they do if they were persuaded that the tithes were being used for purposes which benefitted the country. They know that is not so, and that is why you have to employ police and soldiery to collect, not the rents of the landlords in Ireland, but the tithes of the clergymen. The Welsh are fast realizing the value of the treatment they have received at the hands of the English, and here let me read a passage from a speech of Lord Salisbury at Newport, a town which is not in Wales but in which the people speak Welsh, and the people of which earnestly sympathize with the Welsh in their struggle against the establishment of the Church. Lord Salisbury said—

"If the Church were disestablished in every part of the land, all the machinery by which God's word has been preached, by which Christianity has been upheld, by which all the ministrations of religion have been carried to suffering humanity, would be destroyed at one blow."

The people there know perfectly well what has been done by the Church in Wales. What have we seen lately? Lord Salisbury flaunts the Church as the sole upholder of religion, but at this moment we see a Bishop of the Church of England being prosecuted — for what? For Nonconformity. The Prelate in question holds great place, great position, great revenues; he holds them upon certain conditions, and he is now being prosecuted for resolute and wilful disobedience to those conditions. That is not a pleasant state of things to contemplate. I might quote case after case, but I well content myself with one more extract. I will not go to Nonconformists. I quote dignitaries of the Church. The Bishop of Liverpool, in November, 1887, said, with regard to the Church, which Lord Salisbury spoke of as the sole upholder of religion in Wales:—

"The Church was in a most unsatisfactory condition. It was a Church without order and discipline; it was in a state of lawlessness, anarchy, chaos, and confusion, and, unless some remedy were applied, must make shipwreck. In short, in matters of discipline they were at present drifting like a ship without a rudder; the evils of the position were simply incalculable; party spirit increased in every diocese, diocesan institutions were starved and neglected, one man would not support them because he thought them too high, and another because he thought them too low. The advocates of disestablishment rejoiced to see them playing their game so well, and biting and devouring one another. The gulf between clergyman and clergyman became wider and wider every year, and ministers of the same Church kept aloof and separate from one another, as if they did not belong to the same communion. At the rate things were going on,

it would soon be impossible for the Bishop to ask candidates for orders, any questions about the Lord's Supper. If all that did not constitute a danger, he did not know what did."

This is the description given by one of the lordships of the Church so lauded by Lord Salisbury. How he could have made such a vaunt I cannot say. I will not say he wilfully stated what he did not believe; no doubt he believed what he said, but he must have been profoundly ignorant of the views of the Welsh people, and I cannot understand how he should be ignorant of what Dissenters have done in Wales in contradiction to what the Church has done. I have alluded to what the Church did formerly in Wales and to its present position. But what have Dissenters done? The Church in Wales in former days almost destroyed religion, and would have done so absolutely but for the Dissenters. The late Dean of Bangor in a paper he read at Swansea, in 1879, said, "In 1715 there were but five Nonconformist Chapels in Wales." In 1879 there were 2,717 belonging to three denominations alone. There were in 1879 12 weekly journals and 18 magazines published in Welsh, and five-sixths of these were produced by Nonconformists. So these Nonconformists are bringing back religion to Wales, and educating the people in it. I could quote much more from the late Dean of Bangor, but let me now, leaving the dignitaries of the Church, refer to the evidence of a Peer—Lord Aberdare. He lives in Glamorganshire, and I know no man who knows Wales better. I do not agree with him on all points, but I do with this which he says of Wales:—

"The religion of the country would have died out if it had not been for the exertions of the Nonconformists."

That is in South Wales. Now hear what the Bishop of Bangor says of North Wales.

"If every Church in Wales belonging to the Establishment were closed, there would still be ample accomodation for the whole population in the places of worship belonging to the Nonconformists."

I thought I had done with references to the Dean of Bangor's Paper, but this I may quote. He says—

"Dissent in England is sporadic, and in Wales endemic; local in England, national in Wales. Five-sixths of the Welsh-speaking millions rea outside the Church."

The people of Wales complain of your Establishment; they are a people who love freedom, and hate an Establishment for teaching them their religion; they prefer in religious matters to be left to their own arrangements. They were driven from the Church. The Church had once a position in Wales, but has lost it never to regain it. I know the country pretty well, and I have no doubt of that. The complaint we make, the appeal we make to the House, is that the English people are maintaining a Church, which is not the Church of Wales, but the Church in Wales. This is our whole quarrel with you; it is a statement confirmed by the great dignitaries of the Church of England; the Archbishop of Canterbury himself speaks in the same way; there is no Church of Wales, he says, there are four dioceses of the Church of England in Wales. The Dean of Llandaff, any other venerable and most highly respected dignitary of the Church speaks in the same way. An objection is sometimes urged against this Motion, that it contemplates changes that require the utmost deliberation, and would require legislation that must be taken up by a Government. Well, of course I should not dream of bringing in a Bill; that is the work of a Government; only to be carried through by a Government. It is argued, too, that Wales is really part of England. Part of our island it is, but the people are of a totally different nationality. Those who use that argument are Englishmen who do not know Wales. I am sure they would get no Welshmen to join their opinion. The people of the two countries are as distinct as two countries can be; there is more distinction, I think, than between England and Scotland or Ireland. They are distinct in thought, in habits, in manners, in laws; the Welsh have language differing from English more than any other, a language which is gaining ground, and, more than all, they differ in religion. I do not wish to go upon the religious ground at all. I wish to put this simply as a national question. We, as a nation, object to this institution you impose on us, and, as a nation, desire to see it abolished. It is said that we take this up as a political and Party question, but that is not the case. I have also heard it said that so far from this being a

Party question, that were this grievance removed we, the Liberal Party, would lose our strength and influence in Wales. I do not listen to the argument. I do not believe there is any truth in it. It may be so, and if it is so, then it is evidance of the bitterness and keenness with which Welshmen feel the position of Establishment, that they subordinate their political opinions to the desire to get rid of it. But I know Wales with a life-long knowledge, and have no fear that Welshmen will desert the Liberal cause. Their love of that cause is not due to this grievance they desire to get remedied; it is due to the same love of freedom that prevents them from accepting the Established Church. Welshmen will still remain true to their colours; but whether they do or not does not influence me in moving this Motion. I am not prompted by Party motives. I move in this matter because I believe our claim is founded on right and justice. We have the Irish and Scottish people with us, and a great portion of the English people are on our side. The English Nonconformists are with us as a body. A great section of the English people are satisfied with their Church, but of this I am sure, that if the position were changed, if a condition of things such as exists in Wales, obtained in England, and the Church were out of sympathy with the Nation as a whole, Disestablishment would not be delayed for one more Parliament, and the English people would sweep away the Establishment. What I have said as to the proportion of Churchman to Dissenters in Wales can be amply maintained, I ask the English people to do as they would be done by, to assist Wales in removing an Establishment which has failed in its duty, and which can not be maintained without a violation of justice and equity.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, as the Church of England in Wales has failed to fulfil its professed object as a means of promoting the religious interests of the Welsh people, and ministers only to a small minority of the population, its maintenance as an Established Church in the Principality is an anomaly and an injustice which ought no longer to exist." — (*Mr. Dillwyn.*)

*MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): In rising to second this Motion, I hope I may be permitted to express the deep regret I feel at the absence from among us of a late Member of the House, who discharged the duty now entrusted to me, on the last occasion when this subject was before us—a man who, for twenty years, was a respected and familiar figure on these Benches, and who for fifty years was the spokesman and representative of all that is best and purest in the character of my countrymen. As time presses, I will endeavour to narrow, as far as I properly can, the issues before us. I will not enter into the abstract question of the merits or the demerits of an Established Church, though, I confess, just now that is rather a tempting subject. Nor will I stop to argue with those who hold what I may call the "divine right" theory of the Church of England; who regard any infringement on her privileges, and any encroachment on her revenues, as an act of sacrilegious plunder. That doctrine, I think, received its death blow some twenty years ago, when Parliament disestablished, and disendowed the Irish Church; for if that great measure settled anything, it settled this—that a privileged Church cannot, as such, exist in this country, unless it fulfils two conditions; unless in the first place it comprises the clear and undoubted majority of the people, and secondly unless it is so intertwined, so interwoven with the moral and religious life of the people that you cannot uproot the one without inflicting a serious and, perhaps, a deadly blow on the other. That point was established by the Irish Church Act. Now I am perfectly willing to agree, for the sake of argument, that taking England by itself, the Established Church does, to a certain extent, fulfil one or the other of these conditions; but I emphatically deny that it fulfils them as regards Wales, or that, humanly speaking, it can, within any measureable distance of time fulfil either the one or the other. And now let me meet a preliminary objection. It really is the only argument worthy of the name that can be adduced against this Motion. We are told that as Wales is an integral part of England, therefore, the Church in Wales is an integral part of the Church in England; and, therefore, you cannot disestablish the one, without disestablishing the other.

Now it seems to me that argument is somewhat of a two-edged sword, for it could be used with quite as much effect for an attack upon the English Establishment as for the defence of the Welsh Establishment. But I pass from that, for I entirely deny the major premise. It may be perfectly true that there is an Act some 350 years old, an Act so musty, so antiquated, that no two Members of the Treasury Bench can agree whether it is in force or not—the Attorney General and the First Lord of the Treasury are at loggerheads on the subject—it may be true, I say, that by such an Act, Wales was politically incorporated with England. But surely, if we have not by this time learned that it requires something more than an Act of Parliament to stamp out a nationality and to fuse two nations into one, then the lesson of the last century has been sadly thrown away. The truth is that it is a lawyer's argument and not a statesman's argument; and I am not surprised that Lord Selborne, a lawyer of lawyers, should have urged it very strongly. He took the trouble to go down to Wales to tell Welshmen that they were no more entitled to call themselves a nationality than Yorkshiremen. All I can say is I think we ought to be exceedingly obliged to him, for if anything were wanted to make our seats safe it was the speech made by Lord Selborne. There is in Wales (and Monmouthshire, which is Welsh in everything but name) a population of about 1,700,000 — equal to half that of Scotland, and to about one-third of that of Ireland—and of these the great majority are divided from their English fellow-subjects, not merely by a physical barrier, not merely by a difference of race and temperament, but by the greatest barrier which can separate one nation from another,—the barrier of language. The Welsh have a language which, as my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) says, is so far from dying out, that it is actually gaining ground. A language more unlike the English language than are one-half the languages on the Continent. If any hon. Member doubts that let him spend six months in trying to learn it, and I shall be very much surprised if at the end of that period, he can pronounce the words which mean "Yes" and "No" in Welsh so that a Welshman can understand him. If ever there was a people entitled to distinctive treatment at the hands of Parliament, that people is the people of Wales. You have shown that by legislating on temperance and on educational questions from a Welsh standpoint. And now I will quote a high authority, an authority that both sides of the House will listen to with attention, viz., Lord Derby. He is not like Lord Selborne, a great lawyer, but he is something more—he is a great statesman. Lord Derby says:—"The question of maintenance or the Disestablishment of the Welsh Church ought to be decided in accordance with the wishes of the Welsh people, whenever those wishes are authoritatively declared." Now, when we find the Welsh people practically unanimous, but when we find the Welsh Members voted down by a majority of hon. Gentlemen who really know less about Wales than of many foreign countries, less than they know about Egypt or the Soudan, then it is, I think, time to remember what has been said by one of the most thoughtful of living historians, Mr. Spencer Walpole, viz., "It is absurd to say a country enjoys representative institutions when her delegates are uniformly outvoted by men of a separate race." This remark was made in reference to Ireland, but hon. Members will pardon me if I apply it to Wales. And now let me apply the tests I spoke of. Is the Church the Church of the majority of the nation? The suggestion is so ridiculous that if you were to put it to any Welshman, if he were not restrained by his native politeness, he would laugh in your face. If the Welsh Church comprises the majority of the people, how is it that five-sixths of the Welsh Members sent here—26 out of 30—are pledged to the hilt in favour of this Motion? How is it, to take the latest illustration, that in the County Council elections, which, rightly or wrongly, were fought on Church and Chapel lines, the Nonconformists swept the board? A good deal has been said about that religious census, giving the attendances at church and chapel in Wales on a certain Sunday two years ago. I have no great faith in such tests, for on that particular Sunday each party, having ample notice of

what was going to happen, went into the highways and hedges and brought in the maimed, the halt, and the blind, so that in some parishes there was hardly a church or chapel baby left in its cradle. Of course, by picking out all the cases most favourable to themselves, and ignoring the rest, the Church advocates have been able to draw the comforting assurance that they are only in a minority of two to one. This has been the subject of considerable discussion in the Press, and the *Times* sent down a young gentleman of considerable literary ability to write "Letters on Wales." He was connected I think with half the clergy of the diocese, and of course he looked at the matter through Church spectacles. I do not blame him for that. But in one of these "Letters" it is stated that on a particular Sunday in the parish of Ruabon the number of persons who attended church was nearly double that which attended the Nonconformist chapels. But what are the facts? I have stated them in a letter to the *Times*, and they have never been challenged. Of the village of Ruabon it might be true; but the old parish of Ruabon, now sub-divided into four parishes, has a population of over 15,000 persons. In that parish 21,305 persons on that Sunday attended the three Nonconformist services, giving for each service 7,068, or 47 per cent of the whole population, while only 4,445, or 1,482 for each service—that is to say, 11 per cent of the whole population—attended the three services of the Church of England, showing that the attendances at chapel on that particular Sunday were more than four times as numerous as those in church. Taking the country throughout, that is a fair proportion, but if you go further west the difference is much greater. But it would be absurd to rest this great question upon the result of a sum in vulgar fractions, especially as the most ardent champions of the Church Establishment only contend that the Church is stronger than any other denomination taken by itself. But then it is contended that if the Church does not attract to herself the majority of the population while they are alive, at least she gets hold of them after they are dead. This singular argument is strongly urged by Lord Selborne in his book on the defence of the Church against dissent and in support of that singular argument Lord Selborne quotes figures to show that in the cemetery of Ruabon the burials in the consecrated portion of the cemetery largely exceeded those in the unconsecrated part. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) improved on that argument, for he showed by figures a few years ago that the Burials Act of 1880 had had comparatively little operation in Wales. No doubt he thought that a slap in the face for me. But what is the real explanation? I am bound to say that, with some notable exceptions, the clergy have availed themselves of every technical objection they can find to prevent Noncomformists from making use of the Burials Act. Every effort has been made to deprive them of the benefits of the Act, and unless the Act be amended, as I am now striving to amend it, I think the greater part of them will continue to be deprived of its benefits. But there is another answer to this argument, and I give it on authority of Lord Beaconsfield himself. In a very remarkable speech made in 1873, in moving the rejection of the Burials Bill, Mr. Disraeli quoted most elaborate statistics to show that in some parts of Wales two out of three of the Nonconformist chapels had burial grounds of their own, in which its members naturally preferred to be buried, and I remember he added, in his characteristic manner, that if he had been a Nonconformist and contemplating burial, he would have regarded such a state of things with profound satisfaction. But an hon. Member opposite has placed on the paper an Amendment which states that the Church is gaining ground in Wales. I am thankful to think that no Welshman has had the hardihood to put his name to that Amendment. The hon. Member who has done so (Mr. Byron Reed) comes from Yorkshire—a county which Lord Selborne said was quite as much entitled to a nationality of its own as Wales. I can assure the hon. Member that his Amendment may do for Yorkshire, but it will not do in Wales. I do not know what knowledge the hon. Member has of Wales. My knowledge of the Principality, I am sorry to say, dates back to a period about a quarter of a century be-

fore the hon. Member was born. When I saw his Amendment down on the Paper I turned to that repertory of knowledge to which we all refer on these occasions, and I found he was born in London and educated near London, that he was Parliamentary Secretary of the Church Defence Association, that he was a Director of certain Conservative Societies, that he was a liveryman of the City of London, and a member of the Shipwrights' Company, that he had been Secretary of certain Conservative Associations, and, last, but not least, Secretary to Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, M.P. I admit that all these things are very considerable claims to our respect; but I want to know what have any of them to do with Wales. No doubt it is possible that in some of the fashionable watering-places of Wales, such as the hon. Member no doubt frequents, and in the border towns, which are really more English than Welsh, there may be some grounds for his assertion. But my own experience—the experience of my own senses, which I must prefer to any evidence the hon. Member can adduce—teaches me that in Wales proper the exact contrary is the case. I must admit that the Church is making tremendous efforts just now. It is putting out all its strength. That is one of the things we complain of. It is being converted into a propagandist Church, a proselytizing Church, and, indeed, it is so occupied in fighting dissent that there is some danger of its ceasing to preach or at least to practice Christianity. Indeed, when I think of the enormous forces, the wealth—and wealth is a great power in a poor country—the charitable doles, the Primrose bounties, the social influence, as it is called, which the Church in Wales can call to its aid, I am amazed that its progress should have been so small. Hon. Members little know the petty persecutions, the social ostracism, the boycotting which the poor Welsh Nonconformists have to endure. To my hon. Friends and myself these things matter little. County society even in Wales is not so peculiarly lively that it is impossible to live without it, and I have often consoled myself with the reflection that it is better to be boycotted than to be bored. But it is a very different thing for the struggling tradesman, the man who has a young family to support, to be told at the doors of the hall or the mansion—in substance, if not in words—"No Dissenter need apply." What is the result? Why, that the Church has got hold of the two ends of society—the plutocrat and the pauper—those who are most able to give and those who are most anxious to get—Dives at one end of the social scale and Lazarus at the other. Sydney Smith once said that carriage-horses always drive to church, but in Wales it is said you can tell whether a man is a Churchman by the hour at which he dines and the number of servants he keeps. To say, therefore, that the Church is in a minority is to state only half our case, for it is a minority composed precisely of those persons who are best able to pay for their own religious worship. Now, I wish to speak with the greatest respect of the Welsh clergy as a hard-working and most zealous body. I ought, I am sure, to be the last man to depreciate them. But they are in a most unfortunate position, which cannot help exercising a deteriorating influence on them. The incumbent is usually the chaplain and almoner of the squire, and too often the electioneering agent of the Conservative candidate. Talk of political Dissenters! Why, half the vicarages in Wales are political camps and centres at election time. In my county at the last election half the vicarages were virtually committee rooms, and I believe if I had been defeated half the church bells would have been rung to celebrate the event. No doubt we shall be told by the hon. Member opposite that munificent sums have been collected for Church purposes of late years. That is quite true, and all honour to those who have done it; but, to my mind, that is the very strongest argument in favour of the voluntary system, for it shows that the Church in Wales is quite able to take care of itself. I should like upon this subject to quote the words of one of the ablest and staunchest of Welsh Churchmen—the late Dean of Bangor, a brother of the present Bishop of St. Asaph—spoken at a Church Congress at Swansea some time ago. "The Church," he said, "has made material progress of late. Churches, parsonages, and schools have been built; but how many of these churches are empty? Five-sixths of

the Welsh-speaking millions are outside the Church." That is the testimony of your own witness. But what are the Nonconformists doing? They collect from the poorest class in a poor country £300,000 a year, more than £30,000 more than the whole of the State-paid income of the Welsh Church. The Calvinistic Methodists alone gave £173,000 a year. They have 4,500 places of worship, and a corresponding number of ministers and preachers. No doubt both Churchmen and Dissenters have been making great efforts—and again, I say, all honour be to those who make them. But there is this difference—the churches are built with the cheques of the wealthy, the chapels with the shillings and pence of the poor. As to the boasted conversions of Nonconformist ministers, I confess I look upon them as very apocryphal. There may be some weak-kneed brethren, tempted by the prospect of the loaves and fishes, to desert the faith of their fathers. But, as a rule, these stories remind me very much of the stories we used to hear about the conversion of the Jews. There was a Society for the Conversion of the Jews with an income of £1,000 a year. But it seems that it costs £2,000 to convert one Jew. Of course, the consequence was that that society was only able to show one conversion every other year, and naturally enough, in one of the odd years, when no conversion had been shown, there was a good deal of dissatisfaction expressed at the annual meeting, and some person said they must either increase their income or give up business altogether. However, one member rose to the occasion and pointed out that even with their present resources they had two alternatives open to them. They could either half convert a whole Jew, or wholly convert a half Jew. So in Wales, it seems to, me Church proselytizers spend their time between half converting a whole Dissenter, or wholly converting a half Dissenter. In the last century Arthur Young estimated that at the then rate of progress it would take 4,000 years to convert Ireland to Protestantism. Assuming it took a 40th part of that time, it would be a little unreasonable to ask us to wait until the great-grandchildren of the hon. Member opposite had been able to convert the Nonconformists of Wales into a minority. I come now to the second test. Is the Establishment essential to the spiritual well-being of Wales? All I can say is, that if salvation is only to be found in the bosom of the Church, the Welsh must be a nation of heathens and publicans, for it is common ground that until lately the Church shamefully neglected its duties. According to Lord Aberdare, religion would have disappeared from the country but for the exertions of the Nonconformists. But what are the facts? In no part of the country are the gaols so empty, the places of worship so full, or the amusements of the people so pure and elevating. I have been told by Judges that when they passed from Denbighshire to Cheshire it was like passing from light to darkness, and I remember that some time ago in three counties in Wales there was only one prisoner, and she was an Englishwoman. The people do not take their pleasure in prize fights and gambling clubs. They leave that to Peers of the Realm. I am not going to notice what has been said by politicians in ermine—men who use the Bench as a pulpit or a platform to promulgate theories they have advocated in the House of Commons. I will come to the surer ground of judicial statistics, though I am almost afraid of quoting them after the light and airy way in which the Home Secretary recently pitched to the winds his own Home Office Returns. The Home Secretary seems to live in a transcendental world, undisturbed by such vulgar things as facts or figures. Perhaps, however, there may be some Members on this side of the House—some inferior beings who may desire to know what is the exact proportion of crime in England and Wales. I will tell them. The senior Member for Merthyr (Mr. D. Thomas) showed the other day that, while in 1887 the population in Wales and Monmouthshire was to that of England in the proportion of 6 per cent, the serious crimes committed there were in the proportion of little more than 3½ per cent. I know that these arguments will have little effect on the serried ranks of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I know that I might as well—

> "Go stand upon the beach,
> And bid the main tide bate its usual height."

as appeal to those hon. and right hon. Gentlemen. But there is one body to

whom I can appeal with more confidence —the Liberal Unionists. I can assure them this is no question of the integrity of the Empire. I feel sure that we shall have the vote, if not the voice, of the right hon. Gentlemen the Member for West Birmingham. I do not suppose the author of "The Next Page of the Liberal Programme" is the man to say one thing on a platform in Wales and another on the floor of the House of Commons. Will the eldest son of John Bright be found false to the cause of which his revered father was the most eloquent advocate—I might almost say the apostle? But I will quote on this question one of the greatest of living Liberal Unionists — as great, though, perhaps, not so advanced, as those I have mentioned—Lord Derby, who, three years ago, at Blackburn used these memorable words:—

"I consider Wales has a strong claim to be separately dealt with. In Wales, as was the case in Ireland, the Nonconformists form the bulk of the population. The Welsh people constitute in many respects a distinct nationality, and I do not see why we should refuse to Welsh loyalty what we have granted to Irish sedition."

Yes, but what made the Irish seditious? True it is that the Welsh are a most loyal and law abiding nation, but I am afraid there is a limit even to endurance, and things have happened lately in Wales which show that it is just possible that the time may come when we shall have a second Ireland in Wales. But I prefer to appeal not to your fears, but to your sense of justice. Whether we shall succeed to-night or not I do not know, but this I know, that time is on our side. We have behind us the rising manhood of Wales, aye, and our ranks are being constantly recruited from that great and growing body of our fellow citizens who, taught by the lessons of our own Colonies, taught by the experience of the great Republic beyond the ocean, taught, above all, by the lamentable spectacle in our midst of a State Church divided against herself, are beginning to learn that the true way to keep religion pure and undefiled is to keep it unspotted from the world, and that the Church of Christ herself will walk the earth with freer and firmer tread when she has ceased to lean on the crutches of an Establishment.

Mr. Osborne Morgan

*Mr. BYRON REED (Bradford, East): I do not for a moment intend to follow the right hon. Gentleman in his excursions into biography and personality. I venture to think that neither the good temper nor the good manners of the House are promoted by such a course, and, personally, I am content to leave the right hon. Gentleman's remarks to the judgment of both sides of the House. My own personality is, of course, a most unimportant matter, but I represent a much larger number of voters than the right hon. Gentleman, and I have had many opportunities of making myself personally acquainted with this subject. I think I shall be able to show the House and the right hon. Gentleman that, although I have not the length of years, the Parliamentary experience, the knowledge of the Welsh language or of Wales, which the right hon. Gentleman possesses, none the less I have had opportunities which, perhaps, I have been able to put to some useful purpose of forming a clear and intelligent judgment on this question in Wales itself. But I take this higher ground, that the question now under consideration is one not limited to the Principality of Wales. I can well understand the tactics of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) and those associated with him in this Resolution, and I can well understand that the ancient policy of dividing in order to conquer has found favour with Gentlemen on the other side. But those who act with me in this matter are agreed that when the question of the Disestablishment of the Church comes to be settled by the people of this land it must be settled as a whole and not as a part, and we are perfectly content to take the judgment not only of this House, but of the constituencies in all parts of the country as soon as hon. Gentlemen opposite give us an opportunity. [*Ironical Opposition cheers.*] That derisive cheer means that that opportunity can be given only by Her Majesty's Government; but I must remind hon. Gentlemen that at the two last General Elections, when the question of Disestablishment was brought forward, they and their leaders "began with one accord to make excuse." I have intimated that I will deal with Wales as an integral and indivisible part of the United Kingdom, and in support of that

view I will quote an authority of weight, not only with hon. Gentlemen opposite, but with the whole of the House—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. Speaking in this House in 1870 on a Motion of the late Mr. Watkin Williams, the right hon. Gentleman said:—

"There is a complete ecclesiastical, constitutional, legal, and I may add—for every practical purpose—historical identity between the Church in Wales and the rest of the Church of England. I will not say what it would be right to do provided Wales were separated from England in the same way that Ireland is, and provided that the case of Wales stood in full and complete analogy to that of Ireland in regard to religious differences. But the direct contrary of this is the truth. I think, therefore, it is practically impossible to separate the case of Wales from that of England."

Upon the expression of the right hon. Gentleman, and on that indubitable historical and constitutional authority, we take our stand, and we decline, as Englishmen, to separate the Church in Wales from the Church in the rest of the country. Now, I am led to inquire somewhat curiously into the motive of this Disestablishment agitation at this particular time, and I have come to the conclusion, from a rather exhaustive study, that hon. Gentlemen on the other side are becoming alarmed at the rapid and ever-increasing progress which the National Church is making in that part of the kingdom, and that they have come to the very definite conclusion that now or never is their time. I shall be able to show this evening by quotations from writings in the interest of the other side sufficient weight and warrant for any statement I shall make. The *Cambrian News*, a journal with which the hon. Member for Swansea is no doubt familiar, goes so far as to be even somewhat rude to the hon. Member, and to use expressions which I would not venture to employ. It says:—

"The inhabitants of Wales are not satisfied. Disestablishment is an urgent matter in Wales, and must be pushed forward even if Welsh Members have to make themselves disagreeable. Such weakness as Mr. Dillwyn displays in reference to Disestablishment creates derision, and he will very soon be requested to hand over that subject to a more robust Member of the Party."

Hence this Motion, hence this discussion, and hence those biographical and historical observations of the hon. Member for Swansea.

"Wales is becoming," continues the *Cambrian News*, "very impatient of Members of Parliament, whose only notion of representing the constituencies is ministering to their own personal pride."

So much, then, for the inspiring motives from certain sections of the community in Wales which stirred hon. Gentlemen opposite.

*MR. DILLWYN: Where is the *Cambrian News* published?

*MR. BYRON REED: I am not aware. I do not pretend to read the imprint of every newspaper; but I presume that the hon. Gentleman does not for a moment impugn the accuracy of the quotation?

*MR. DILLWYN: No, Sir; I wish for information.

*MR. BYRON REED: Well, I will leave the hon. Gentleman to settle that for himself. If the hon. Gentleman wishes to know the place of publication of the *Cambrian News* I should think he could easily obtain it from his colleagues on that side of the House. I pass on, however, to make this observation. The Motion of the hon. Member lays especial stress upon the alleged failure of the Church in the Principality. Now I know of no standard by which failure or success can be decided; I know of no official or ecclesiastical standard; I do not know that even the hon. Gentleman himself has attempted to set up a standard, and I am therefore driven to take this course of inquiry, to make comparison—the testimony in respect of which is ready to my hand—between the strength of the Church and of Nonconformity in Wales. Now, I will make the proposition, which I do not think will be broadly denied in this House, that at almost every official assembly of the various dissenting bodies in Wales, in the pages of almost every annual report which appears in their interest, the general complaint and wail is one of failing resources, of decreasing members, of ministers without charges, and of charges without ministers, and, above all things, the ever increasing burden of debt, which weighs as a fatal incubus on the shoulders of dissenting religious effort. On the other hand—I doubt whether hon. Gentlemen opposite will listen to this converse of the picture—we have at every official gathering of Churchmen in Wales, in the charges of

Bishops, in the visitations of Archdeacons, at the Ruridecanal Chapters, and upon every occasion when Churchmen come together, congratulations at the increase in members, and at the greater grappling with the population. With each year, aye, each month, it may be said that while the Church is waxing, Nonconformity is waning. [*Laughter.*] That broad proposition I hope to be able to prove by authority which even the hon. Gentleman who laughs will scarcely be inclined to contend against. Now, the chief leading reasons which suggest themselves as being the grand cause of the decline of Nonconformity in Wales are these:—Firstly, the increasingly political character of the ministers; and, secondly, the ever increasing burden of debt. Chapels are built hastily to gratify sectarian rivalries without the means of paying for them, and the debt hangs like a millstone round the neck of the congregations. Another cause is that the younger generation of Welsh people are more and more becoming members of the National Church, and, indeed, it is a common complaint in the columns of the Nonconformist Press in Wales that the sons and daughters of Nonconformist parents attend the services of the National Church. Now, Sir, I quote from a paper of some authority and repute, the *Homilist*, published in London. It contains a communication from Nonconformist Minister, who says he is also a Radical, in the course of which he writes—

"The characteristic feature of Welsh Nonconformity is the general air of lethargy and sloth that pervades everything. The mournful cry issues from the chapels in the land, 'Who hath believed our reports, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?' Echo answers 'Who.' Can you explain it?' Within the last few years the preacher has found out that 'the kingdom—which is not of this world' does not afford scope enough for his eminent talents, and has set his heart on setting in order the 'kingdom of this world.' Enter into conversation with your minister and try and find out his hobby. Politics first, politics second, politics to the end of the chapter. No place is too sacred for political discussion. Monthly meetings, quarterly meetings, associations, and general assemblies do not consider it incompatible with their religious character, nor in any way *infra dignitatem* to discuss political subjects and pass resolutions bearing on the same."

Then I find that a writer in another Nonconformist paper, the name of which I dare scarcely venture to pronounce in the presence of hon. Gentlemen—the *Goleuadd* says:—

"There is an itching among certain ministers of the gospel for seats on the County Councils. Some weak and thoughtless persons encourage them. The young people in the churches require training. The Sunday School teachers meet to prepare for their work, and anxiously look towards the door for the appearance of their minister. The members at the church meeting ask, Where is the pastor? There is a family in trouble and wants consolation and advice. A widow and children have lost a husband and a father, but there is no minister to comfort them. There are sick members waiting day after day for a word of sympathy from their spiritual advisers. Several young people about leaving their homes for England want good counsel. The minister was at Twrgwyn on Sunday. Monday and Tuesday he was at the monthly meeting. On Wednesday he was arranging meetings of the Liberation Society, and in the evening assisting at one of them, with Mr. C. R. Jones, of Llanfyllin. On Thursday he was at a Conference at Shrewsbury, and in the evening at an Eistedfodd at Caersws, in the capacity of adjudicator and reporter for the *Liverpool Daily Post*. On Friday at an important Parliamentary Committee meeting at Chester in support of the great Liberal Party, Mr. John Morley being present. On Saturday he returns home to preach on Sunday without a new sermon, and prays God to help him in his weakness after having spent the week like the prodigal son."

Well, I venture to say that these are by no means exaggerated statements of what happens among the mass of Nonconformist ministers in Wales. It was not always so. In the early days of Welsh Nonconformity, the fire and fervour of the minister's enthusiasm in the pulpit, and at the class meeting, moved the religious instincts of the Welsh people. But so surely as the minister of religion is degraded from his higher calling to the lower level of Party politics, so surely does he lose that spiritual influence which after all it should be his chief object to attain. Of such ministers might not a Macaulay write, "As we wax hot in faction, in battle we wax cold." As they wax hot in political faction, so will they wax cold in spiritual work; so will they find the ground slipping from under their feet in Wales; so will they find the rising generation going back to the Church of their fatherss, as a Welsh orator said years ago, "like bees returning to the old hive," and so in days to come, and not veryfar distant, will hon. Gentlemen find it difficult to go to their constituents with Motions for the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. I spoke just now of the burden of debt

which oppresses Nonconformist effort in Wales. I suppose it is within the knowledge of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and it should be within the knowledge of all Members of this House, that in very many cases chapels are run up by enterprising builders as matters of speculation. Popular preachers, who are supposed to draw by pulpit influence, are looked upon as eligible objects of such speculation. A writer in a certain Nonconformist paper —*Y Seren*, of the Baptist Order in Wales, says:—

"It is known to many of us as a denomination that the pecuniary state of our churches in many places is exceedingly undesirable, and that there are some of us who have suffered and are suffering because of our chapel debts. Many have experienced great losses through lending their money on our chapels, being under the impression that the denomination as such was responsible for the debt."

It is not to be wondered at with such a state of things that there should be repudiation of chapel debts, and that disappointed money lenders and speculators are inclined to look with considerable disfavour on those who have turned out so bad an investment. Now, I wish to quote from a writer referred to by the hon. Member for Swansea—I mean Mr. Thomas Gee, who may be described as the chief priest of the Liberation Society in North Wales. The journal—the *Baner*—in which he writes is published at Denbigh. Mr. Gee, writing in the *Baner* recently, and speaking of the Calvinistic Methodist body in Wales, says—

"The report for the year 1888 just printed shows a decline in the number of members. Here we have the ministerial labour of this great body showing no results, but a loss. The thousands of pounds collected for the ministry, the work of the Sunday schools, and all the prayer meetings have produced no results. The ministry is become more learned, or ought to be, for a large sum of money is spent on it, but there is a fear that it is deteriorating, and that this is the natural inference to be drawn from the report."

This, Sir, is by a Liberationist writer in a Liberationist journal in North Wales, and I will not trouble the House with more than a hurried extract from it. The Rev. R. Ambrose Jones, speaking at a meeting at Abergele, called attention to the personal defection of the members of the churches of his denomination. He said—

"If we do not take care of the poor, they will cease to take care for us, and will go to the Established Church and follow hundreds of other poor."

The same gentleman went on to say—

"The people are less, as well as the money, and members of Sunday Schools are less by scores than the year before."

Also—

"I find that we have not increased for some time in the number of our members, and possibly not in our attendance, which is a lamentable fact worthy of notice."

It is impossible to search any official reports of the Nonconformist Press without finding day by day testimony to the same effect—namely, declarations of the decrease of Nonconformist membership in the Principality. Again, on the other hand, I find in the *Cambrian News* a letter which says:—

"The Church parson, with his daily services, his oversight of elementary schools, his mission work, his house to house visiting, and his numerous societies, is a hard-worked individual. It is the Nonconformist minister, with his one week-night service and his two services on Sunday, who is becoming an object of reproach."

In point of fact, the bulk of the philanthropic and benevolent work which is common to the whole community falls on the shoulders of the clergy and people of the Church, and not on the ministers and members of dissenting denominations. I will quote again, and this time from the speech of a gentleman occupying a high local position, and I am glad to see the hon. Member for Swansea still in his place as I wish him to hear this quotation. The Mayor of Swansea, speaking at a meeting of the Swansea Industrial Home for Girls, said:—

"He could not understand why all those present at the meeting, except himself, were members of the Church of England and not of the Nonconformist bodies. They were asked the question why the Church of England was progressing and why the Nonconformists were going backwards. He replied that it was because the Church of England was honestly doing its duty, and the Nonconformists were not."

This from the Mayor of the borough represented by the hon. Member opposite is in itself a striking testimony. I now leave this part of the inquiry into the condition of Nonconformity in Wales, cursory as it has been, but based on the testimony of the Nonconformists themselves, and turn to a consideration of what are the Church's

position and prospects and rate of progress at the present time. I find that unquestionably recent years have given a great impetus to Church work and influence in Wales. I will not attempt to fix any particular time for the beginning of this revival, but undoubtedly great assistance was given to it by the holding of the Church Congress at Swansea ten years ago, and many of us hope that when the Congress meets again in the autumn of the present year at Cardiff, it will again mark a new departure on the part of the Church in Wales, and give to its work in the Principality a new impulse to energy. I find that in 1632 there were 700 clergy in the 847 parishes of Wales, whereas in 1888 the number of clergy had increased to 1,434, and the number of parishes to 987. This more than doubling the clergy in half a century, is a very pregnant fact. In the ten years ending 1886, no fewer than 228 churches were restored, enlarged, or built afresh in Wales; and taking the confirmations in the churches, I find from the official returns of the Bishops, that the average number of confirmations in 1886 was 6,528, that in 1887 it was increased to 7,028, and that last year it rose to 8,454. There is a very curious fact in regard to these confirmations. In very many cases the Bishops found they were called on to confirm not only numbers of young people who were members of Nonconformist families and congregations, but also many Nonconformists of advanced years. According to the Bishop of Llandaff—

"On December 4, 1887, at a confirmation held at Llantwit Vawdre, when there were 90 candidates, all but three were converts from Nonconformity. At Pontlottyn, on December 11, 1887, when 31 adults were baptized, and 53 males, and 68 females confirmed, nearly all had been formerly Nonconformists."

The same Bishop also says—

"A remarkable confirmation was held at St. Lleurwg's Church, Hirwain, on December 3, 1888. The list of candidates included 20 men, of whom five were Wesleyans, aged respectively 27, 58, 21, 44, and 30, one being a local preacher, and two others 'members;' two were Baptists, aged 28, and 12, the first being a 'member;' two were Independents, aged 62 and 30, both 'members;' two were Calvanistic Methodists, aged 32 and 21; of the remainder one Churchman aged 69, another 52, and a third 50. Twenty-two boys and girls were confirmed, of whom two were Roman Catholics, two Wesleyans, and one a Methodist."

Mr. Byron Reed

I think the House will agree with me that this is a very striking testimony to the position and influence of the Church in Wales at the present time; and the fact that these confirmations include not merely Nonconformists, but many of advanced years, shows that they have found in the Church that spiritual comfort which is denied to them in their own communities; that in the Church, at least, it is possible for men to agree about religion and still to differ about politics, and to join in prayer, and the worship of Almighty God, without discussing mundane and political concerns. The Bishop of Llandaff stated at a meeting of the Church Diocesan Society in 1887:—

"In the last four years I have opened 24 new churches and mission churches. I have opened one every month this year, and shall continue to do so during every remaining month of the year. These churches contain on an average 300 sittings each. In one valley in my diocese, with a population of 18,000, there was only one church and one mission church containing 560 sittings. In that valley there are now six churches with 2,000 sittings. I am thankful to say that these churches are all now well filled. Five years ago in this and the neighbouring valley there were not more than a score of houses and two churches: there are now in them 75,000 people, 16 churches and mission churches, and about 20 clergy."

One piece of statistics more; and the figures I will quote relate to the town of Cardiff. I find that during the five years to the end of September last there were completed the enlargement and restoring of churches at Cardiff and the building of new ones at a cost of £51,000, raised from voluntary contributions alone on the part of the clergy and lay people of that town. I will now pass to two cases which I think this House will regard as typical ones. At Llanelly (?) in 1837—just over 50 years ago,—there was only only one church, with only 590 sittings, the attendance being only about 200, while the parish had the services of one clergyman and a share of the services of another. In 1889, instead of that one church there were eight churches and 37 mission rooms, with sitting accommodation for 3,374 persons.

*Sir E. REED: It would throw great light on this question if my hon. relative would give the increase of the population.

*Mr. BYRON REED: If I am doing violence to the facts of the case, it

will be open to my hon. relative or any other hon. Gentleman to supply the deficiency at the close of the observations I am making. In the case of Llanelly, whereas the average attendance 15 years ago was 200, it is now 3,019, while the number of communicants is 2,330. But there is an even more striking case. I will go to Swansea, which is an appropriate place to name. In 1881 the parish of St. Mary in that town had a population of 39,000, and at the present time that has been increased to at least 42,000. Since January, 1885, there have been built in that parish three stone and two iron churches, and they have all been paid for. They have not been built on loan or mortgage, but have been paid for out of the pockets of the people who believe in the ministrations of the National Church. They have been erected at a cost of £11,041. I find that the fourth stone church is already nearing completion, and will be consecrated in July. The sum of £4,200 has been raised. The third iron church is now in course of erection, and will be shortly opened, at a cost of £800. In the parish of St. Mary, Swansea, there were in 1885 six working clergy, and in 1889 there were ten; on Easter day of this year there were no less than 997 communicants in the parish, and during the four years 605 candidates were confirmed. But what is perhaps the most striking illustration of all, and one which is of the greatest personal interest to the hon. Member for Swansea, is that whereas in 1885, at the then School Board election, only one Churchman was elected, and he only sixth on the poll; at the School Board election held a few months ago, three Churchmen headed the poll, and the fourth was among the elected candidates. Thus, in fact, while declension is the order of the day with the Nonconformist bodies in Wales, growth and development are the order of the day with the National Church. This agitation might have had some chance of success had it been started 50, 30, or 20 years ago; but, Sir, I venture to think that when the hon. Member for Swansea says that the progress of the Church has come too late, it is this agitation for Disestablishment which is too late; that the Church has more than held her own in the Principality in recent years, and that not only in this House, but in the constituencies, as hon. Gentleman opposite will find, she will hold her own against any agitation. As a hostile writer has admitted, the National Church is now putting forth her strength in Wales, and churches which a few years ago were comparatively empty are now comparatively full. I should like before I sit down to say a few words in reply to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman opposite on the question of religious censuses in general and for Wales in particular. The only reason why a religious census, alike for Wales and England, has not been taken in a formal and official fashion is because the proposal has been resisted by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House. Churchmen, at least, have nothing to fear from the numbering of the people according to their religious denominations, and if hon. Members opposite will support us next year when the Census Bill is introduced, a clause may be inserted which will secure a religious census for England and Wales. But, although from no fault of ours we have had no formal and official census of that kind, yet an unofficial and informal one has been taken which is not satisfactory to anybody—it was satisfactory neither to us nor to the Liberation Society, and for opposite reasons. In the first place, we object to an unofficial numbering of the people. We saw beforehand that Mr. Gee, under whose auspices an unofficial numbering of the people in attendance at places of worship was conducted, was a pronounced partizan interested in bringing out a certain set of figures to point to a certain conclusion. What happened? He sent out the papers at his own time and by his own officers to take the census in his own fashion; and it was impossible to expect that true, accurate, and just returns could be obtained in that manner. Only part of the returns were published, the information collected not being very much to the taste of Mr. Gee and his friends, who found to their astonishment that the Church was proved to be much stronger in the Principality than they had reason to suppose. Although we begged for the figures, and invoked the aid of the Liberation Society, they have remained to this day secreted in the pigeon holes of the *Baner* office

at Denbigh; and the Secretary of the Liberation Society was so disgusted with the whole operation that he wrote to the *Times* disclaiming all responsibility for this census. Had they proved a crushing condemnation of the Church, we should have had the figures readily enough. We also object to the mere numbering of attendants at places of worship, as an adequate test of the religious feelings of the people or the strength of the Church; for inducing people to attend the church is by no means the "be all" and "end all" of the work of the clergy. The clergy of the National Church are not only a preaching ministry, they perform much valuable pastoral work; and it may at least be said, without any disparagement of the Nonconformist bodies, that the clergy of the Church of England are able by the specialities of their organization and methods of work, to reach masses of the people whom dissenting preachers are unable to discover, and to minister to thousands who would not otherwise receive spiritual comfort and consolation. I am inclined to think that if it were not for the Welsh Vernacular Press very little would be heard of this agitation. This Press is for the most part written, edited, and managed by Nonconformists who combine the functions of the pulpit, the platform, and the pen in one occupation. These gentlemen stir up the worst feelings in language so gross as to be almost unquotable, in language which it is a disgrace in educated men to utter, and which it pains enlightened and sensitive men to read. [*Cries of* "Quote."] An hon. Member cries "Quote." I shall be most happy to oblige him. One Welsh paper has spoken of clergymen of the Church of England in these generous and Christian-like terms. They are, he says, "hypocritical," "sodden with deceit and shame," "lazy drones, unable to preach, move, or work," "blind teachers, soft-brained and dumb," whose visits are "accompanied by nothing better than the fierce breathings of hell." That is very well for a beginning. [A Voice: "That is not the vernacular."] No; it is an English translation. I suspect that in the vernacular it would be a great deal worse. Another writer speaks of the "dirty, stinking, cobwebbed Cathedral of Llandaff," where "bats, owls, and Bishops get fat." I find that these gentlemen of the Welsh Vernacular Press are by no means satisfied with the advocacy of Welsh Members; the hon. Member for Swansea is much too moderate for them, and I doubt if ever the hon. Member for the Rhondda Valley spices their political pabulum with sufficient fire to satisfy them. The *Genedl Gymreig* allowed a Calvinistic Methodist minister to write—

"In Wales up to to the present the people have the upper hand. If they wished to retain their ascendency, and especially if they wish to reap the fruit of their victory, they must be prepared to hold their own through blood."

The *Seren Gomer* is the quarterly publication of the Baptists of Wales, and is ably edited by one of their ministers. It said—

"Wales must be regenerated on Republican and Democratic principles. We look forward with certainty to the day when the four Republics of Britain will move on side by side in peace and comfort, when kings and queens will be left to shift for themselves. We believe that the masses of Scotland, Ireland, and England will help Wales in its laudable efforts to regain Home Rule. If we had Home Rule in less than a month we should cashier the lazy and tyrannical drovers out of our country. The thousands of the Church of England would be utilized to educate the youth, the 'Wales of the future,' and the hills and dales of our country would be restored to their true owners—namely, the Welsh people, not some handful of greedy and rapacious landlords."

I notice that the right hon. Member for Denbighshire does not cheer that sentiment. I find these writers have no confidence in the House of Commons. One of them says—

"No one can conquer in war without fighting and in war there must be shedding of blood in order to gain a victory. We cannot get the people in the house of palaver to attend unless we do something more serious than talking. They will not think we are in earnest unless we take up arms and make use of them also."

It is an open secret on this side of the House that the election of the junior Member for Merthyr (Mr. P. Morgan) was looked upon by no means with unmixed delight by the political dissenters; and I find one of these gentlemen writing that there were—

"Thousands of true Israelites who would not have that uncircumcised Philistine to reign over them."

I have one more quotation which I hope

will satisfy even hon. Gentlemen opposite. A writer in the *Celt*, in December of last year, speaking of the Disestablishment agitation, said:—

"We have strong hopes that this unholy marriage is about to be dissolved. 'Disestablishment and Disendowment is coming,' when the Church of England will be put to live on her own resources, and they, the parsons, will have to work or starve. They have enjoyed the fat of the land for ages; but the wheel has nigh completed its revolutions. 'There is an angel standing in the sun' (Rev. xix., 17), and that angel is William Ewart Gladstone 'and he had begun to cry with a loud voice to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heavens, 'Come to the supper of the great God,' and the end will be that all the fowls will have their fill of their flesh, by the wealth of the State Church being used for National purposes."

Sir, that concluding sentence is the key to the whole position, and shows the meaning of the agitation. The endowments of the Church in Wales are being held out as a golden bait by unscrupulous agitators—men who pander to the worst passions of the public mind and the worst ignorance of the unlearned, in order to bring about an Act which, were this Parliament to adopt it, would be an act of the grossest injustice and the cruellest wrong, which would undoubtedly recoil upon the hands that wrought it—an act which would assuredly earn for the generation that accepted it the condemnation of its successors. Holding these views I beg to move the Amendment which stands in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "having regard to the great and growing influence and work of the National Church, especially in the Principality of Wales, this House is not prepared to entertain proposals for its Disestablishment in that part of the Kingdom."—(*Mr. Byron Reed.*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*SIR JOSEPH BAILEY (Hereford): I shall not feel it my duty to occupy much time in seconding the Motion of the hon. Member, but in doing so I wish to say that, speaking as one who has spent his whole life in Wales, I have often expressed my personal regard for the Nonconformist ministers in Wales and appreciation of their work, and I only join issue with them when they assume a position of antagonism towards the Established Church. I am sorry to see that my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea in the commencement of his Resolution describes that Church as the "Church of England in Wales"; but no man knows better than my hon. Friend that whatever he may think of its shortcomings at the present time, that Church is the National Church of Wales, which has existed for 16 or 17 centuries. In the Library of the House there is a curious work, "The Laws and Institutes of Wales," and it contains the laws made for Wales 100 years before Norman or English set foot in that country, and it describes how the King assembled his Parliament consisting of Peers and Ecclesiastics of the National Church. Now, Sir, although no boubt, in Wales as in England, a foreign nation having conquered the country, forced on the land Bishops in Wales as they did statesmen and warriors and nobles in England, still it was the Bishop and not the Church which was imposed on the people. So far is the Church from being an alien Church that having looked carefully through the names of the clergy in the county in which I reside, I find that the name of nearly every one of the early clergy of those days was the name of a Welshman and not of a Norman. I will take, for example, a frontier town which is likely to present the strongest case for the Norman. The first four clergymen named in the frontier town of Hay are, Rhys ap Thomas, Rhys ap Gwillim, Thomas ap Howel, and Thomas ap Evan. Such persons could hardly be of Norman descent. I was surprised to hear my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea mention two cases of drunkenness and immorality among the clergy of Wales somewhere in the 16th century, but if it is necessary to go back 300 years to prove a case of vice and immorality, the purity of the Church is by that very argument almost estab-

lished. The hon. Member for Swansea has referred to the number of churches and chapels in Wales. He stated that in 1750, out of 1,191 churches in Wales 769 belonged to the National Church of Wales, and he thereby proves, I think, that up to the commencement of this century the greatest portion of the Evangelical work in Wales was done by the National Church. The hon. Member has also said that the number of chapels at the present day is 4,200, which will seat altogether 92 per cent of the population. In one district in my own county, I believe there are sufficient seats for 15 per cent in excess of the population. The compiler of the census of 1851 estimated that seating accommodation for 58 per cent of the population was sufficient for the wants of the community, so that the present accommodation is far in excess of the requirements.

*Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN: Are the seats full?

*Sir J. BAILEY: I can speak of the churches in my own neighbourhood, and they are full. It is of course absolutely impossible that when the seating accommodation is in excess of the requirements all the seats can be full. I received only the other day a letter on this subject. I conceal the name of the writer, but it is at the service of any hon. Gentleman who likes to have it. It relates to a Welsh Wesleyan Chapel, and the writer states that the people are suffering very much from the debt on the chapel, and an effort is being made to remove it, but there are only three male members of the congregation, and the burden is too much for them. Well, I think that chapel, however small it may be, can hardly be full. The right hon. Gentleman has assumed that because the Representatives of the country are almost all on those (the Opposition) Benches, the country therefore speaks with one voice for Disestablishment. In the election of 1885 there were 98,000 voters for hon. Gentlemen opposite, and 67,000 for the Conservative side. There were, besides, four uncontested seats; but that will not bring up the Nonconformist majority to anything like what the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) thinks it is. I do not claim that the Church people are in the majority, but I believe they form one-third of the entire population. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Osborne Morgan) made an amusing allusion to the Church collecting into her fold the dead Welshmen. Now, I should tell the House there are two occasions in life on which a Welshman sets very great store. One is his marriage and the other is his funeral. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members may regard this as a joke, but Welshmen will save money for their funerals, all their friends on the whole country side are asked to attend them. The whole of the family of a Welshman look upon his funeral as a very great occasion. I will show the House by statistics that while a Welshman likes to hear the ministrations of a person of his own tongue, his own rank of life and so on, and therefore frequently goes to a Nonconformist place of worship, on the great occasions of his life he seeks the Church. His funeral and his marriage both take place at the church. I find that on the occasion of marriage 330 persons in a 1,000 persons seek the offices of the Established Church, and only 304 seek the offices of all the Nonconformist communities put together. It is true, of course, that a large number are married before the Registrar, but even if they should all be Nonconformists it would not reduce the proportion of churchmen below one-third. Something has been said about the census got up a year or two ago by the Nonconformists, and the result of which has never been given to the world. I cannot say I regret it, because on both sides there are accusations of fraud and unfairness. I heard of one clergyman, for example, who is said to have counted his children, first in the school and afterwards in the church. On the other hand, I heard of a Nonconformist minister who counted his flock in the chapel and then dismissed them to hear a famous preacher in another chapel, where, of course, they would be counted at the conclusion of the service. These stories show that if you want to number the various religious bodies in the country,

you must do so in an authorized way, and that is a test which we on this side of the House do not shrink from, but court. The Church is accused of neglect, but statistics tell an entirely different story. The Church has had great difficulties to encounter, but if I needed any evidence of its activity I should quote a speech of the late Mr Richard, who said in the last 25 years a great improvement had taken place in the Church, that new churches had been built and that the services were being conducted with far more zeal and earnestness; "but," he added, "it is too late." Sir, I cannot help thinking that the reason this Motion is being brought forward to-night is that my hon. Friend, seeing the advance made by the Church in Wales in the last two years, fears that his proposal may be made too late. Now, Sir, the defence of the National Church of Wales is not likely to be left in such feeble hands as mine, but I have ventured to raise my voice because I believe that the figures of my hon. Friend are entirely incorrect, and that he does not dare to bring them to the test of the census; because the Church which has been described as slothful is one of activity and advancement; and because, while it is described as the English Church in Wales, it was founded before the English or the Normans ever set foot in the country, and has kept alive the spirit of religion in the Principality for 17 centuries, since the time when Christianity first shed its light in the land.

*SIR H. VIVIAN (Swansea, District): The hon. Member who moved this Amendment stated that he had considerable experience of Wales, but he did, not tell us how the experience arose how long he had been in Wales, or during what time he had investigated this question. I take leave to say that after hearing his statements I cannot for one moment believe he knows anything whatever of the religious condition of Wales. I do not desire for one moment to deny the very considerable activity of the Church in Wales. We rejoice in it, we assist in it, we do all we can to help it on. We are Christians, and we do not stand upon the narrow and limited ground of one particular form of worshipping our God. We desire, as far as possible, to bring the Holy Christian religion home to everybody. Therefore, as we rejoice at seeing the enormous increase of the Nonconformist body in our country, so we rejoice in seeing any increase in the Church. I am a Churchman myself, and desire to see the Church increase. No doubt the Church suffers from having neglected the people, but what I say is that the enormous majority of the Welsh people are not Churchmen, but Nonconformists. They have built their own places of religious worship, and they maintain them by expending enormous sums of money year by year. I believe they contribute between £300,000 and £400,000 a-year towards their places of worship. But I deny altogether the statement made by the hon. Member for East Bradford (Mr. Byron Reed), that Nonconformity is waning in Wales. I say it is increasing in Wales. The returns of the various Nonconformist bodies show that their hearers and their communicants are increasing. I find from a return which I only received to-day that the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, according to the Year Book for 1888, had 1,430 congregations, numbering 132,000 communicants and 282,000 hearers, and that their subscriptions for maintaining their worship amounted to no less than £175,899. The returns show a large increase on previous years. The Welsh Congregationalists have 1,017 chapels and 268,000 hearers; the Welsh Baptists, 810 chapels, and 221,000 hearers. These three denominations alone therefore amount to 772,000 members. I have lived in Wales all my life, and I see nothing but a constant increase in the efforts of the Nonconformists to meet the religious wants of the people. No one probably knows better than I do the number of new chapels that are being built. I represented Glamorganshire for 28 years and I can bear positive evidence as to the enormous increase which has taken place. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Byron Reed) said the debts of the Nonconformist chapels hung heavily round the necks of the congregations, and

were not being paid off. I can only say that year by year they do pay off their debts, and I know a case in which £13,000 was laid out upon one chapel, and the debt is now reduced to about £1,500. Constant efforts are being made to pay off the debts of these chapels, and they are constantly being paid off. There is no mistake so great as to suppose that you can meet the religious wants of the people by paying the whole of the costs of a place of worship beforehand. All I can say is, that if the Nonconformists of Glamorganshire had not met the enormous increase of our population by building chapels and incurring debts upon them, a large proportion would have been heathens at this moment. The population of that great county increased by from 300,000 to 511,000 during the 28 years I represented it. Well, the parochial system itself cannot meet an increase of that kind. The hon. Gentleman spoke of repudiation. I certainly never heard of Chapel debts being repudiated in my neighbourhood, and I am quite sure that such a scandal would have rung through every newspaper if it had occurred. They pay their debts honestly, and as a matter of fact, many of our great Chapels are now entirely free from debt. The hon. Gentleman talked of running up Chapels as speculative buildings. No more silly statement was ever made in this House. I have never heard of a Chapel being so run up. The history of our Chapels is to my mind, a noble one. When a new colliery is opened and a new district is started, large numbers of workmen being attracted to a place which was before a lonely valley, congregations are got together by earnest men, generally meeting in the first instance in small houses. They form what they very properly call a Church, and from that they go on to build a small Chapel, and they increase it, and increase it, and increase it. I think I have myself laid the foundation stone of a Chapel, which has been five times increased—five times pulled down and rebuilt. That is the right way in which the increase of provision for religious worship should take place. The hon. Gentleman made a great point of the increase of the Church in Swansea. I can tell him that is entirely due to the efforts of one earnest and zealous good man. Before he came, there was no increase at all, but when he came the Church sprang into life—and we are all delighted it is so. The hon. Member began his speech by stating that the Church of England and the Church of England in Wales were one and indivisible. That might be all very true if you by your superior power could force your Church upon us. But you must denationalize us first, and that you cannot do. The thing is impossible. You cannot stamp out the Welsh race. It is a more ancient race than the English or any other race in this country [*Ministerial laughter*]. Nobody can possibly deny that who knows anything of the history of his country. I should like to see anyone stand up in this House and say that the Cymri are not the ancient British race. It is too monstrous to talk about. The Welsh have their own language and have had it for unknown ages [*Laughter*]. It is supposed that the first inhabitants of these Islands were a race akin to the Esquimaux, that the Cymri, or Welsh, came in after the last Glacial Epoque which is calculated to have occurred 200,000 years ago, but at what precise date they first occupied the British Isle is unknown, although it is certain that it was very remote. You must bear in mind that the Welsh maintain their individuality, and that you did not conquer them for 800 years—that is to say, from the days of the Romans up to the time of Edward I. They resisted you for 800 years, and you cannot stamp out a nationality of that kind. We demand on their behalf that you should treat them as a nation, and not impose an alien Church upon them, but that you should grant us absolute religious equality. We have a right to it and it must come. I have been in this House many years, and I have seen many a reform as stoutly resisted by hon. Gentlemen opposite as this is resisted by them, but they have had to give way in the end. Strong as they may be in their majority, they will have to give way on this question of the Disestablishment of the Church of England in Wales.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda): It is very pleasant, indeed, to sit here and hear that the Church is gaining ground in Wales, and it would

give us the greatest pleasure if our own knowlege of the facts could prove the veracity of the statement. I am sorry that the hon. Member who moved the Amendment, and after professing to have so much knowlege of Wales and the Welsh people, had to resort for his authority to a paper called the *Cambrian News*, inasmuch as no Welsh Member in this House has ever heard of the existence of such a paper. Wales can boast of having four Conservative Representatives in this House, and not one of the four has dared to move an Amendment to this Motion. I question very much whether one of the four dare support the Amendment. It has been seconded by a professed Welshman, but one who has failed to find a seat in his own country, and who is not likely to find one there. We need not go back quite so far as my hon. Friend for the facts to prove what has been the history of the Church in Wales. Every Welsh Member, and probably every Welshman, is able to give his own experiences of the Established Church in Wales, and I can give my own, and the circumstances in which I was brought up. It has been my lot, fortunately or unfortunately, fortunately, I think, to be brought up among the toiling masses of the Welsh people, and my experience of the Estalished Church has been a bitter one. There was a Church of England in that part of Wales where I was born and bred, as there is in almost every industrial village. It was the Church of the few, the Church of the privileged classes, and to belong to it was to form part of the community, having a share in the loaves and fishes that were distributed. That Church the children of Nonconformist parents were, much against their will, forced to attend on Sunday mornings; if they did not so attend, castigation was meted out to the children themselves, and before Monday evening the parents were made aware that they had incurred the displeasure of the authorities. My mother wept many times to see the state of this hand after receiving castigation for non-attendance at church. Over and over again has it bled under the castigation for not attending at places of worship that my mother conscientiously thought I ought not to go to and where I should be better outside. For obeying my mother and disobeying the authorities I have suffered this castigation many times. What, I ask, has the Church done for the masses in Wales? [An hon. MEMBER, "Nothing."] Perhaps it would not be strictly accurate to say nothing, because, to its own thinly clad and partially fed flock, it has distributed some blankets and clothes at Christmas, and disburses a few tickets for soup, coals, and so forth. But for the mass of the people it has done nothing, absolutely nothing; for nine-tenths of the Welsh people, workmen who have never visited the Church, it has done nothing. Nothing to teach them self-respect, nothing to create in them or develope in them a spirit of manliness, nothing to help them to fight their manifold enemies, nothing to raise the workman in the social scale, nothing to relieve him from the burden, the ever increasing burden, of the fear of pauperism. What the Church did, if it succeeded at all, was to teach us to do our duty in all stations of life, and under all circumstances to obey the dictates of our spiritual pastors and masters, and to prepare the poor for that huge relief house, where in declining years a man receives relief for which he must be separated from that partner with whom he has shared the joys and sweets of life. What has the Church done for Welsh workmen? Nothing but to teach him to be a miserable serf. I fully admit that there are some brilliant exceptions among the clergy in Wales; men of great heart and true, who strive to do good to their fellows, and whose efforts fail from their connection with the Church. If it had not been for such men as these, the breach between the Established Church and the Welsh people would have been greater than it is, and it is quite wide enough. The renewal of the tithe war in Wales has caused much social irritation, and grows with such rapidity that it not only discredits the Church in Wales, but it is a danger to the State. It embitters the social life, it shadows that sweetness and light which ought to be the legitimate fruits of religion among

men. Moreover, in the past, the clergy of the Church of England in Wales has shown many examples of intemperate and vicious life, and in many parts of the country have taught the people that there is a great distinction between the Church and religion. The people know that the terms are not synonymous and not convertible; they know that fully; they teach it to their children, and they write it in their books. In one of the last best novels that deals with Welsh life, it is well exemplified, for one of the characters, a clergyman, being spoken of, the remark is applied to him; "Ah! what a pity that he is a clergyman; that he does not belong to religion instead of to the church." Can you wonder then that these people are crying out for the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. Can you wonder that they are crying out and thirsting for religious equality in the country. Now the Amendment to this Resolution has been cleverly couched for unique language. It refers to a National Church, but it does not say the National Church of what country, and I should like to know if the hon. Gentleman who proposes it will say it is the National Church of Wales. Are the Welsh not a nation? Have we no country of our own? Have we no customs of our own? No writers of our own, unique and absolutely our own? Have we no language, a language that no Englishman in this House can pronounce? Have we not every single characteristic that is necessary to make a nation? If that is so, how it is possible for the English National Church to be the National Church of Wales? It never was and it never will be. Reference has been made to the Rhondda Valley, which I have the honour to represent, and to the increase of churches in that constituency; but, as has been already pointed out, no reference has been made to the increase of population or to the increase of chapels. In one part of the Rhondda Valley there is one chapel, in another two, in another three, in another five, in another three of the largest chapels in the United Kingdom, one of which would more than seat all the attendants of the Church in that part of the valley. The Church has one schoolroom chapel and one Church, another in course of erection, but the Church has unfortunately been built, not by the Church of England as an institution, but by one of the lords of the land, and under a peculiar condition—namely, that if ever there should be a sufficient number of Catholics come into that part of the valley the Church of England then would have to give up the building for the Catholics. These three churches are built not by the Church as an institution but by the landlords, and for money made out of Royalty rents and ground rents, money by the sweat of the brow from the Welsh colliers. As the Welsh poet says:—

Gwron dewr, anturiwr diwyd
Yn mheryglon munud awr
Yw y glowr dreulia'i fywyd
Yn nghelloedd llaith y dyfnder mawr.

[*Cheers and laughter.*] You supply me with another argument. You laughed at my language, and still you want to teach me and my fellow countrymen religion in an unknown tongue. You have tried to Anglicise us for many years and you have failed. Certainly you have failed in the past, and you will fail in the future. It is with the money produced by the hard work of the Welsh colliers that those churches you now call the Church of England in Wales were built. When Disestablishment comes, then you will say it would be robbery to take those Churches back, created from the alms of the people, but we are prepared to let you keep all that, if you disestablish the Church. Give us religious equality, you can keep all the fabrics, and we can build fabrics of our own. We are told that now the Church is beginning to mend its ways, and is following the footsteps of the Nonconformists, and therefore the Church should not be disestablished, but I am afraid my hon. Friends it is now too late. We are not prepared to wait much longer, and we appeal to you, our English brother—Wales is your little sister, and appeals to her big brother for religious equality, and sure I am the Church itself would receive the greater benefit from that equality.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): As it has been my lot on more than one occasion to take part in these discussions, I should not like to omit the

opportunity of joining in that tribute to the memory of a very distinguished Welshman who took part with us on the last occasion when this matter was discussed. I came to different conclusions, for I started from different premisses, but I desire to bear my testimony to the memory of the late Mr. Henry Richard, who was a sincere lover of Wales, and treated this question with obvious sincerity. Nor can I avoid before addressing any observations to the arguments advanced, paying some tribute to the speech, to which we have just listened, which I am sure was heard with pleasure and respect in every quarter of the House. It is not for every Member to approach the subject without some thing of party feeling. But the hon. Member for the Rhondda Valley, though he spoke with genuine feeling, carefully abstained from anything which could cause irritation or aggravate his hearers. In the speech of the Mover of this Resolution there was a marked difference from the speeches which used to be delivered. The burden of the song used to be "the alien Church." Nothing of that sort was to be found in the speech of the hon. Member for Swansea to-night. I cannot help feeling that some of the facts which were adduced in the last debate made some impression on my hon. Friend's mind. They have not made that effect on the mind of the hon. Baronet opposite. He still describes the British Church as alien. Well, St. Paul was an alien no doubt, and so far the description of the hon. Baronet is accurate, but I am not aware of any other ground upon which a Church founded shortly after the Christian era can be described as alien.

*SIR H. VIVIAN: It was Romish for 700 years.

MR. RAIKES: I am speaking of a time anterior to that, though I do not venture to go back for 200,000 years, which I think was the period the hon. Baronet claimed that the Welsh language could be traced as spoken in these islands. I do not go back so far as that, but at all events, I venture to say that I recognise in the speech of the hon. Member for Swansea a disposition to abstain from one or two of the weakest points previously presented to us. Nor have we had much of those piles of statistics so easily multiplied on either side. There is quite enough evidence of the majority of Nonconformists in Wales, but as to the precise amount we are likely to differ. The result of the census recently taken would induce us to think that the belief of the Nonconformists themselves has been shaken as to the amount of their preponderancy. I am not prepared, however, to take the fact of their being a majority as a test which should be applied to this question. I am not prepared to accept the Separatist doctrine that Wales in this matter has a separate existence from England. The word "nation" is a vague and ill-defined word. A race, no doubt, the Welsh are. They have a very ancient patrimony in their mountains and their language. They have some traces of an ancient literature, and they are now doing something towards building up a modern literature. I do not wish to disparage a warm-hearted people, among whom I have lived for many years. I do not wish to dispute their claims to racial considerations, but if they wish to claim a position as a nation, they must show that they have a history such as Scotland has—the history of a separate nation extending down to modern times. The Welsh race are a part of the British nation, and no man can aspire to a higher heritage than to be a member of the British nation. And as they are a part of the British nation, so is the Church in Wales a part of the British Church. The Church is not merely the Church of England, as people are fond of calling it when they wish to use the term in an invidious manner, but it is

the Catholic Church as it exists in these islands. The Church in Wales is a part and parcel of the Church in this country. It owes its origin to no *plébiscite*, as to no counting of noses; it is the body that was planted in these islands as the Christian Church. It may have had its faults, it may have made mistakes, or even committed misdeeds, but as to its historical continuity I am prepared to admit no doubt whatever. That is the view which has been, as we know, advocated in a most eloquent manner by no less a person than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), who at that time had not assumed the proud position of the angel in the sun who was to call on the fowls of the air to devour the carcase. Our view has been well set forth in the Amendment. I do not think there has been any disposition in this Debate on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite—and I honour them for their candour—to dispute the growth and increasing vigour and development of the Church in Wales at the present time. My hon. Friend the Member for Swansea, who will forgive me for calling him the Rip Van Winkle of religious controversy, has endeavoured to strengthen his argument by a reference to the shortcomings of the clergy in the year 1623. Surely my hon. Friend hardly thinks it likely that a practical body like the House of Commons is going to disestablish the Church of Wales in the year 1889 because there were some drunken clergymen in the Principality in the year 1623. The right hon. Member for Denbighshire has said he is glad that nobody has had the hardihood to assert in this discussion that the Church is gaining ground in Wales, because it is a proselytizing Church.

*Mr. G. O. MORGAN: No; I did not say that.

Mr. RAIKES: Yes; I took the right hon. Gentleman's words down at the time. He said the characteristic of the Church at the present time is that it is a proselytizing Church.

*Mr. G. O. MORGAN: I did not give that as a reason for its gaining ground.

Mr. RAIKES: The right hon. Gentman said he was glad that no Welsh Member had the hardihood to say that the Church was gaining ground in Wales, and then he proceeded to amplify his argument by describing the Church as a proselytizing Church, and by holding it up on that account to scorn and reprobation. I venture to say that my right hon. Friend, although himself not distantly connected with the Church in Wales, has very little knowledge of the history of any Church at all if he is not aware that the first note of a Church—if any Church worthy of the name—is that it was proselytizing; and that no Church is of any use, either in Heaven or on earth, which is not a proselytizing Church. For myself I claim that the Established Church in Wales is a proselytizing Church; and I am glad that hon. Gentleman opposite admits that that is one of its distinguishing characteristics at present. Then the right hon. Gentleman said that the Church in Wales is the Church of the plutocrat and of the pauper. Now, I think that the Primitive Church contained within its limits some people of wealth and certainly a considerable number of poor, and one of its characteristics was that it preached the Gospel to the poor. But the right hon. Gentleman has so little charity for the poorer members of the Church of his country that he has no kinder word for them than to call them "paupers." That is not the spirit which characterizes the Church, and I am quite certain that the hon. Member who spoke last would have hesitated before applying any term so contemptuous to his poorer brethren.

*Mr. G. O. MORGAN: The right hon. Gentleman misrepresents me. When I referred to paupers I meant those in receipt of Poor Law relief.

Mr. RAIKES: I fail to follow the distinction which the right hon. Gentleman wishes to make; but at all events he went on to compare the Churches in Wales with Dives and Lazarus, and it is not known that Lazarus was ever in receipt of Poor Law relief, nor is it known that Dives spent any part of his substance in building churches or providing for the education of the poor. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Non-

conformists raise at the present time an income for religious purposes which exceeds by £30,000 a year the revenues of the Church. Well, all honour to the Nonconformists. I can scarcely find a greater proof of their sincerity and earnestness, but the very fact seems to make it ill-natured to grudge the Church its lesser income. It seems to me that the argument proves the sincerity, vigour, and piety of the Nonconformists, but I do not see how it is an argument for depriving the poorer religious body of its endowments. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that the Welsh people indulge in refining amusements. There is no doubt the Welsh people have great taste for some things, and particularly for music, in which respect they set a good example to their fellow citizens; but we have heard that the Welsh have some other amusements. We have lately heard of Welshmen spending Sunday in drinking clubs in Cardiff, and these two kinds of evidence as to the amusements of the Welsh people do not seem to amount to an argument for disestablishing the Church in Wales. I feel compelled, before concluding, to say a few words with regard to what has fallen from hon. Members opposite as to the recent tithe riots in Wales. It is supposed by some ignorant readers of newspapers, but, of course, by no Members of this House, that the persons who take part in the tumultuous proceedings against the collection of tithe are truly aggrieved because they have to pay this impost. But as a matter of fact the mobs of boys and the crowds of farm labourers who take part in these demonstrations have never paid tithe. I do not deny that the agitation is shared in to a certain degree by persons who dislike paying any imposts whatever, as an hon. Member has said; and I do not say that it has not the sympathy of certain small farmers in Wales; but the bulk of those who take part in the demonstrations against the payment of tithe have no personal interest in the question. It is always urged by the Nonconformists and Radical Press and by hon. Members opposite that there is a necessary antagonism between Nonconformity and the Church. If that were so I could much more readily understand the position taken up by hon. Members opposite; but I do not admit that it is so. I believe that if you go to the more quiet and less political Nonconformists of this country you will find that they are of opinion that the attitude of Nonconformity towards the Church is similar to the attitude of the Volunteers towards the Regular Army. [*Laughter.*] I am not speaking of hon. Members who laugh. Nonconformity now represents a great religious movement of the last century, which affected the Church as much as the dissenting bodies. It represents the development of the religious force of this country that is common both to the Church and the great dissenting bodies, and I think there can be no more false estimate of this matter than that derived from these wretched calculations as to the precise number of persons who go to church and the precise number who go to chapel. Nonconformity is, I believe, a temporary phase in a great religious revival. It is not yet clear how far that revival will redound to the advantage of the Church or the advantage of other bodies, but it still retains great force and has not yet spent its full power. So far, that revival has done at least as much for the Church as for the Nonconformist body. The religious future of this country depends not on the antagonism between the two bodies and the fostering of unfriendly rivalry between them, but rather upon the recognition of the fact that a man may be a very good Nonconformist and yet no enemy to the Church, and that a good Churchman may do honour to the character and spirit of Nonconformity, the one recognizing the services that the other has done in the past, and that other realizing the services that the former may do in the future.

*MR. STANSFELD (Halifax): The time is so exceedingly short that I cannot hope to make myself intelligible on the question as a whole, but I must ask the House for leave to say a few words before we go to a Division. I wish in the first place to draw attention to the marked difference between the terms of the Amendment, and the high-

flying views that have been propounded by the Postmaster General. The Resolution sets forth that as the Church of England in Wales has failed to fulfil its professed object as a means of promoting the religious interests of the Welsh people, and ministers only to a small minority of the population, its maintenance as an Established Church in the Principality is an anomaly, and an injustice which ought no longer to exist No part of that statement or assertion of my hon. Friend has been traversed by the Amendment. What was the Amendment? It has been very carefully and curiously worded. It says—

"That, having regard to the great and growing influence and work of the National Church, especially in the principality of Wales, this House is not prepared to entertain proposals for its Disestablishment in that part of the Kingdom."

The House will mark the great difference between the point of view of the Amendment and that of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General. The latter has told us he cannot admit of any severance; that the Church of England, including Wales, is indivisible, but he appears to be oblivious of the fact that this Motion is not an attack on a Church, but on an Establishment, and that, whilst severing a part of the Establishment, we may leave the Church — the historic and indivisible Church—intact. What I desire to say, in the few moments that I can avail myself of, are two things. I want to state our principle and our intention. The principle and opinion of the Liberal Party on this subject, are well known, and are not new. The noble Lord, the Member for Rossendale 11 or 12 years ago, said at Edinburgh that whenever Scotch opinion, or even Scotch Liberal opinion, was formed on the subject of the Disestablishment of the Scotch Church, the Liberal Party would be prepared to deal with it. Well, the noble Lord has been a Member for a Welsh constituency, and I suppose he knows something about Welsh opinion. I do not believe he will re-echo the views of the hon. Member for Bradford. He knows well enough what is the opinion of the Welsh people on the subject. It is not a question as to whether the majority of the Welsh Nonconformists is two-thirds or more, it is the intensity of their feeling which pervades their whole lives, religious and political, that makes the realization of their hopes, in my opinion, certain in the future. Every great Liberal conference that has been held of late has declared in favour of Welsh Disestablishment. Every Liberal Leader has declared in its favour. The people of England have no right to use their voting power to trample on the religious convictions of the people of the Principality. In our view, to be an Established Church, a Church ought to be national. It should embody and represent the faith of the people, and if it does not do so, it is an injustice to the people, and a degradation to the Church. Is it not a degradation to the Church to bring it down to the level of a Government Department, or of a vested interest. We ought to fight the question out on a higher level; we ought to think more of the Church, one of the highest conceptions of which man is capable. We ought to think more of the Church and less of the connection between the Church and the State. That is our feeling, and our contention. We are profoundly convinced that the English Church in Wales is alien to the feelings and convictions of the people of Wales, and on that ground we take our stand in supporting the Resolution, and it is my firm conviction that the day is not long distant when the Resolution will be recorded as law on the Statute Book of this country.

The House divided:—Ayes, 231; Noes, 284.—(Div. List, No. 113.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put.

Resolved, That, having regard to the great and growing influence and work of the National Church, especially in the Principality of Wales, this House is not prepared to entertain proposals for its Disestablishment in that part of the Kingdom.

It being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 2.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MAY 23.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 15*th May*, 1889.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES) BILL (No. 4.)

Order for Second Reading, read.

*MR. STUART RENDEL (Montgomeryshire): In rising to move the Second Reading of this Bill, I am reminded that twice within the last twenty-four hours the affairs of Wales have occupied the attention of Parliament. Ten years ago the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian introduced a Bill upon the same subject, but for two centuries previously nothing Welsh received the slightest encouragement at the hands of Parliament. That neglect and indifference we now hope has passed away for ever, and we confidently anticipate that Parliament is favourably disposed to consider the wants of Wales in the direction which the Welsh people desire. Appeals to this House have been repeatedly made on this important subject. A Motion was introduced in 1875, repeated in 1877, and again in 1879. Those appeals, however, were unsuccessful. Perhaps Wales may reasonably attribute the want of success to the fact that a Conservative Administration was in power during the whole of that period. In 1880 there was no necessity for an appeal. One of the earliest acts of the Government of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian was the appointment of a Departmental Committee to investigate thoroughly the whole question of education in Wales, and to prepare the way for intermediate education. Wales owes a deep debt of gratitude to that Committee, over which Lord Aberdare presided, for their labours. Those who have read the Report of the Committee will admit that no inquiry was ever more thoroughly or ably conducted, no evidence more clear and complete, and no more valuable recommendations ever made to Parliament. Since that inquiry Wales has possessed a solid foundation of fact on which to raise this question, and there is little excuse for error or vagueness. The Committee touched upon the absence of intermediate education as the principal difficulty and defect in the educational condition of Wales, and they pointed out that it was in respect of intermediate education that the most urgent need for legislation was to be found. Nevertheless, unhappily, it happened that the question of intermediate education proved—perhaps too thorny—certainly too intricate and extensive for the House of Commons to examine with any definite result, and the consequence was that higher education received the assistance which should have been afforded to intermediate education. In point of fact, in Wales we have been in the singular position of building our educational system from the top instead of from the bottom. One of the most important steps in our educational career was left, unhappily, unaccomplished, creating thereby a gap which is felt as a most serious drawback at the present moment. We have had other encouragement in addition to the labours of the Departmental Committee, and especially in the assistance which has been rendered to the cause of higher education by Mem-

bers, without distinction of Party. We had a Bill presented under the responsibility of the Government, which was introduced by the right hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella). It was a Bill which ought to have received more general recognition than it did, and it would probably have resulted in legislation if the career of the Government which introduced it had been sufficiently extended. In introducing the present Bill, I regret that it has not undergone the careful and responsible consideration of a Minister properly charged with the administration of the Education Department. But I doubt whether the House of Commons has yet had presented to it, even in a brief and cursory form, the case for a Bill of this nature, and I crave the indulgence of the House while I proceed to give some information upon the matter, simply premising that I owe mainly, and almost exclusively, all the information I venture to submit to the labours of the Departmental Committee. At any rate, I would ask the House to accept it not on my authority, but on the higher authority of the Committee and their Report. I do not believe that the House of Commons, or the English, Scotch, and Irish Members, can be at all acquainted with the miserable educational destitution of Wales. Let me direct attention, first of all, to the question of endowment. The general endowments of Wales as compared with the general endowments of England are, taking the population into account, in the proportion of one to five, or, in other words, England derives five times the benefit from endowments generally that Wales derives. The case is the same, although not quite so bad, in regard to educational endowments. They are one-third as compared with those of England. Taking it at per head it comes to 6¼d. in England, whereas some parts of Wales, such as Glamorganshire with its large and growing population, are so signally devoid of assistance of this nature that the endowments amount to no more than ¾d. per head. In my own county — Montgomeryshire — there is only one endowed school, and it is entirely in the hands of one gentleman, a noble Lord, who happens to be a Conservative. Taking the general endowments of England per county, they average £55,575, whereas in Wales per county they only average £1,656. Sir Hugh Owen, to whom Wales owes a deep debt of gratitude for the part he took in pioneering this question of education, was in the habit of pointing out that such was the dearth of encouragement for education in Wales that it might fairly be said that learning did not secure to any Welshman, however distinguished he might have been in the pulpit or at college, a higher stipend than £200 a year. Another fact is that these endowments, meagre as they are, are notoriously, for the main part, in the hands of the Church. That fact becomes fully apparent when we consider the position of the schools in Wales and the extent to which advantage is taken of such schools as do exist. It will be found that the intermediate education of England and Scotland provides, on the average, for the wants of something like 16 boys out of every thousand of the population, whereas the actual number of youths taking the benefits of intermediate education in Wales instead of being 16 per thousand is not one per thousand. There is accommodation — or rather there was in 1881—for somewhat more than one per thousand, but of the total number of 1,500 or 1,600 then taking advantage of the schools, it was pointed out by the Departmental Committee that no less than two-thirds were boys belonging to the Church of England. The Committee observed that from that circumstance it was tolerably clear the schools failed to attract the Nonconformist boys, that even such education as these schools provided was restricted, and that the great majority of the Welsh youths were, from their religious convictions, precluded from participating in the education provided. The result has been to reduce the proportion of Welsh Nonconformist youths who avail themselves of the advantages of intermediate education not to one in a thousand, but to less than one in three thousand. Then, again, there is a special case in regard to Wales which ought to be presented to this House. In the first place there is a bi-lingual difficulty. For a long period it was honestly thought by Englishmen that the best thing that could happen for Wales would be that the Welsh language should be suppressed. We are now in a different frame of mind, and all agree

that whether that is an object to be desired or not, it is a thing which cannot be accomplished. Nor is it to the interest of any part of the Empire that the Welsh nationality should be weakened, and at present the greater part of the population in Wales is bi-lingual. There is another special argument which the Welsh Members wish to urge, and that is, Wales at present is subject to another peculiar though gladly borne burden in having to support its own religion. The great bulk of middle class Wales has to support its own religion at a cost, as we were told last night, of £300,000 a year, a very serious disadvantage to the country when taken in conjunction with the want of endowments. There is a minor point worth stating, that Wales is shut out from all the great prizes of education. The University prizes and the prizes of the Church itself are of great value in stimulating and supporting education, but from these the Welsh Nonconformists are in effect excluded. And the hardship becomes a very practical one when we remember that the theory under which the State is served is one of open competition. It is said that the Service of the State is fully open to competition and to talent, but can that be true in the same sense in regard to Wales as it is true in regard to England and Scotland? I am sure that the hardship of calling upon a Welshman to enter into the severe competition of life when he is bound down by a system of examination which gives him no credit whatever for the circumstance that he has a separate language of his own, is one which ought to receive the kindly and favourable consideration of the British House of Commons. With this disadvantage to contend with, it is a wonder that Welshmen triumph over it as they do. With all these disadvantages, the people of Wales have this compensation, that they have a greater aptitude for the study and acquisition of language than the English people generally. In that respect they even rival the Germans themselves. It is a common complaint that in commercial trading and manufacturing pursuits Englishmen are generally distanced by Germans, who are harder working, more thrifty, and better educated men, with a much greater command of language. I submit that the Welsh rival, even if they do not surpass, the Germans in all these respects. They have great natural gifts for the command of foreign tongues; they are not wanting in adventurous spirit, and they are more thrifty, and contented with less than their English neighbours. Even from an economical point of view, I think this House could make no better investment than to assist the Welsh youth in acquiring higher education and in relieving us from the reproach that we are being ousted by Germans in places where hitherto the English have carried the day. It is not only that the Welsh possess these peculiar qualities, but it will be generally admitted that they have a natural tendency for learning of this kind. They have an inherent, traditional, and historic love of learning, which does not exist among the weekly-wage class in England, and for which we must go to Scotland to find a parallel. Let me instance the case of the creation and maintenance of the College at Aberystwith—an institution which was created originally by the pence of the poor, and which found a large measure of support from the quarrymen of North Wales and the miners of South Wales. For these reasons I think the encouragement of the Welsh people in respect of learning would be the best investment the Government could make. Wales has been sometimes spoken of as the cradle of the British name and race. It claims an older religion, and it has an older literature, possibly, than England. It points to its educational aptitudes, and it asks for the completion of the missing link which hampers it in a most unhappy manner. I therefore present this Bill to the House of Commons in the hope of a favourable hearing and with the consciousness that it is a measure which ought to be considered without the slightest regard to Party feeling, and ought in the common interest to be no longer allowed to hang between heaven and earth at the will of the political exigencies of the day. But I take leave to say a word or two on such features of it as distinguish it from the Bill which was introduced at the time the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) was in office, and when that measure was armed with all the weight and power which the then Government

could give to such a measure. The Bill is one for the creation of the necessary local machinery for the establishment of intermediate education in Wales. It is one which in so doing seeks to utilize all the existing educational institutions and endowments which the locality may deem properly available for such purposes. In that sense it renders it possible to reform those endowments with a greater knowledge of the necessities of each case and with somewhat more rapidity and uniformity of purpose and principle than is possible even for the skilled and experienced body at the Charity Commissioner's Office. It of course provides power for establishing schools when schools are absolutely wanted, and, in short, it will enable Wales to complete the educational ladder which it desires to see raised. I would say, further, that the Bill is drawn for the purpose of securing educational autonomy as well. Now, the House has perhaps heard enough of the special claims of Wales within the last twelve hours; but at any rate, I would point out that this question is not one which ought to stir the serried ranks of the Opposition against us. Here is a case in which they may join with us. We ought to have a common purpose; we ought to be able to give that purpose effect with unanimity. But it must be on the basis of recognizing the autonomy of Wales in regard to education. Whatever may be the case with regard to more important interests in Wales than that of education, at any rate, in regard to education the case of Wales is so special, is so free from the hampering influences of any existing institutions and traditions, that surely Wales may be entitled now to ask that she should manage her own educational affairs. For my own part, I confess I should not have ventured, and probably would have been unwilling, to have put my name on the back of this Bill if it had not been that it did provide for Welsh autonomy in regard to education. At any rate, this Bill will represent that which we sincerely believe Wales is willing to accept with gratitude. It represents just so much and no more; it represents —that is, the minimum of what Wales will be prepared to accept. Wales is hardly able to provide a rate; but Wales is willing to do that, we believe, provided she is met by the Treasury in the manner suggested by this Bill. At the same time, the circumstances in which the rate is required, and the fact that Wales considers that enormous national endowments are not rightly applied, are such as would make Wales restive under any serious modification of this Bill. Therefore, in moving the Second Reading of the Bill, I do think I ought plainly to state to the House that we believe there is no room for any serious compromise or modification in respect of the essential provisions of the measure. We hope and trust that the Bill will not be shelved, but will be treated as a serious proposition which, at any rate, ought to be advanced as far as the power of concession and the power of the Government go—in a spirit of practical aid to the question, and not in a spirit we would regard as unworthy, as dilatory, and as intended to defeat the object of the Welsh Members. I have no doubt that if the Government were willing to permit this Bill to be advanced by the House of Commons as the House of Commons, the question would be settled; but for my own part, and I speak with the assent of, at any rate, the large majority of the Welsh Members, I should not be at all disposed to see this Bill simply sent upstairs to a Select Committee. I thank the House for the indulgence with which it has heard the remarks I have thought it my duty to make in introducing this Bill, of which I now beg leave to move the Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. A. WILLIAMS (Glamorganshire, South): I beg, Sir, to second the Resolution for the Second Reading of this Bill, and, at the outset I may say I feel much difficulty in endeavouring to describe the process of evolution by which this measure is now presented to the House of Commons, without at the same time, repeating some portion of what has has been so well said by my hon. Friend the Member for Montgomeryshire (Mr. Stuart Rendel) in introducing the Bill, and thus trespassing too much on the attention and forbearance of the House. It is related of Mr. Justice Maule that when leader of the Northern Circuit, and before he took his seat on the Bench, he was

once asked how it was that he secured so many more verdicts than any one else, and his reply was—

"I get my verdicts in this way; I have twelve men to bring over to my side, and I go on repeating what I have to say over and over again, till I have brought them over."

Such, then, must be my excuse if I do occasionally repeat what may have already been said in reference to this important measure. It is eight years ago—now nearly nine—since the appointment of the Departmental Committee by the Liberal Government, to which allusion has been made by my hon. Friend. The hon. Member paid a just tribute to the efficiency and skill displayed by that Committee in the inquiry they made, and there was one quality which they displayed in a remarkable degree—namely, a sympathetic insight into the character of the Welsh people. What, I ask, does the House think of the statement contained in a letter written by Lord Spencer, who was at that time the Head of the Education Department, to Lord Aberdeen, on the 25th of August, 1880? Lord Spencer said—

"It has been represented to Her Majesty's Government that the existing Educational Institutions, of a class above elementary schools, are not only insufficient in number, but so inconveniently situated, and in some cases so fettered by denominational restrictions, as to be at once inadequate to meet the wants of the Principality, and unsuitable for the character of the population."

That Committee inquired whether Wales had been, and was being, fairly treated in the matter of middle class education. I venture to say that since the Report of that Committee was presented to Parliament and action was taken on the recommendation of the Committee, the case of Wales has taken an entirely new position, and the Principality has risen to a much higher point of consideration in regard to Imperial matters. Last night we Welshmen were engaged in an important debate affecting the religious interests of Wales; and to-day we are discussing another important subject affecting the education of the Welsh people. We are only now beginning to show how very little Englishmen understand as to what Wales is, and what Welshmen are. How few Englishmen are there who can realize that a few hours railway journey will take them into the heart of a country where there are a million of people who speak a language which, as the hon. Member for Rhondda (Mr. W. Abraham) has said, they not only cannot understand, but never would be able to learn. According to the last census statistics of 1871, the population of Wales and Monmouth was 1,426,514, of whom no less than 1,006,110 habitually spoke the Welsh tongue, and of these 870,220 performed their religious devotions in that language. Even now, in my own native country, wherever I go, either in Rhondda or the more rural districts, I still find that Welsh is the common language of the people as habitually used in the home, in the workshop, and in the market. The Departmental Committee, in their Report of seven years ago, mentioned, with a kind of wonder, that there were 12 Welsh newspapers, 18 magazines, including two quarterlies, and a large number of books, all published in the Welsh language, and that as much as £100,000 a year was spent in Welsh literature and the Welsh Press. All this, they said, was done by the humbler folk—not the wealthy class, but the poorest of the people. The Welsh press existed then; and exists now, mainly for the poor, they love their language and the literature it has produced, and the facts I have stated indicate, moreover, that the Welsh people entertain a deep love for knowledge, in endeavouring to acquire which they have for generations encountered the greatest difficulties. Up to 1870, as was disclosed by the Committee's inquiry, the Welsh people had nothing provided in the way of education, except what they obtained in their Sunday Schools and under a most elementary system of instruction. In spite of this, however, they attained so great an advance in their literature as can only be considered really marvellous. The Education Act of 1870 immediately put into their hands an instrument for acquiring knowledge of which they availed themselves to a most remarkable degree. It is one of the most striking instances of the way in which they made use of that Act, that although at that time the means of acquiring elementary instruction were all that were afforded—that instruction being given, too, in a foreign language—because hundreds of thousands of Welsh children were

taught the rudiments of knowledge in a language quite as foreign to them, indeed more so, than French is to myself. Nevertheless, in spite of this, the ardour and enthusiasm of those poor Welsh colliers and workmen were so great that they actually created a true workman's college in which the higher branches of learning were to be acquired. I allude to the College at Aberystwith, to which reference has been made. Then, continuing the process of evolution, we come to the serious difficulty under which the population laboured. The House will perhaps forgive me if I quote from the Report of the Departmental Committee an illustration of the ardour, the desire, the longing and the thirst for knowledge which have always been shown by the Welsh people. The Report says—

"It is not uncommon for young men, after having saved a moderate sum of money earned by the labour of their hands, to put themselves again to school, or to procure instruction in a much more desultory and irregular way, and then, with such preparation, to seek admission to the College at Aberystwith or to one of the Theological Colleges."

In illustration of this I may state that quarrymen and workmen at Bala and Festiniog, out of their weekly wages, were found subscribing to exhibitions to help forward the cleverest of their children to higher places of education. But here, I am bound to admit, there was a sad difficulty and a sad want—namely, the want of the careful preparation necessary for that higher education. We all know the old story told by the Schools Inquiry Commission years ago—namely, that 16 boys out of every 1,000, where there was anything like fair education, ought to be receiving education higher than that provided in the elementary schools; but the result of the inquiry made by that Commission was a very remarkable one. They stated that in Wales and Monmouth, with a population of 157,000, taking the number at 10 per 1,000, 15,700 should be obtaining intermediate education. Sir Hugh Owen put forward a scheme by which he said we ought at least to have 150 schools with an average attendance of 100 between the elementary schools of each locality and those Colleges at Bangor, Aberystwith, and Cardiff. What did the Departmental Committee find, and what were materials from which their conclusions were drawn? They found 27 grammar schools entirely under Church control, frequented only by the children of Churchmen, which was not what the greater part of the Nonconformists in Wales wanted. I do not wish to say a word in disparagement of those ancient ecclesiastical schools—the grammar schools. Members of my family for generations have reaped some of the advantages of the higher class of education at the Cowley Grammar School, which has sent into this House and other high places in England men who have adorned the positions they have held by reason of the education they have received. I may also say that my father was birched by the head master of Cowley Grammar School, and that my eldest brother was, 50 years afterwards, birched by the same master. There is no doubt that for the class for which they were intended there was no better system of classical teaching than that afforded by those old grammar schools; but they are not the schools of the middle and lower class. The endowments of those schools are not the endowments required in that great system of education which the Departmental Committee said was absolutely necessary. The result of their Report is embodied in a single paragraph in this Bill. The first section of the Bill, the Definition Clause, which defines intermediate education, says—

"The expression 'intermediate education' means a course of education which does not consist chiefly of elementary instruction, in reading, writing and arithmetic, but which includes instruction in Latin, Greek, the Welsh and English language and literature, modern languages, mathematics, natural and applied science, or in some of such studies, and generally in the higher branches of knowledge."

Now, I do think that this is one of the most interesting experiments, if we should be allowed to make it, ever attempted in this country in regard to its system of education. Let us try, by the light of experience, to realize what we mean. We all know that there is an important body in this country which for years has been endeavouring in a public spirited way to develop a system of what is termed technical instruction. It is a matter of controversy as to what technical education really means, and I am sorry to find that some of our great Leaders have attempted to throw cold water on the plan. No one who

has read the articles which have appeared in the May number of the *Contemporary Review*, or who have studied with anything like care the industrial progress of the Continent, can doubt that the system proposed for Wales is accessible, and would exactly meet the definition contained in the clause I have read. The answer in that magazine to Lord Armstrong is as clear as it can be, and from every centre of population throughout the country men like the hon. Member for the Govan Division one and all say, "This is the kind of teaching you want." It will make our resources what they ought to be, and enhance our arts and industry by a higher system of training in the arts and sciences. Sir Joseph Lee, in one of those articles, gives an apt illustration of the value of these intermediate schools. He says a man came to him—an ordinary plasterer—who said he knew he was fitted for something better than a plasterer, and, if he had a chance of going to a good school to get some scientific training, he might succeed in his effort to better his condition. That man got an exhibition in one of the technical schools of the Midland Counties, and now occupies a leading position as an artistic designer in one of our great houses. In my own county of Glamorgan, during the last 20 years, it is a most piteous sight to see how much ability, of a kind that is capable of beneficial development among the working classes, is going to waste because we have no schools of the kind I refer to scattered about the district. We do not, as Welshmen, grudge our English and Scotch fellow countrymen their share of the general wealth which is developed by the skill and industry of the two countries; but what we do complain of is that we should have been left for generations without a fair chance of getting on as well as our neighbours, through the want of intermediate education. Within my own personal experience I have seen scores of men, who, as foremen and workmen, might have been developed into clerks of works, underground viewers, and managers of collieries and works, aye, and even into owners of some of the great industrial enterprizes of the country. This is all we ask—namely, that we may be put on something like a level with the rest of the kingdom. It is said there is no precedent for our demand. But I say there is a precedent; at any rate, something analogous to it already exists, for about £78,000 a year is now being devoted to higher education, £42,000 being down in this year's Estimates for the Scottish Universities, and £36,000 for the Queen's Colleges in Ireland. Why, then, should Wales not have her fair share of this? We have been too long overlooked and neglected, and I agree with my hon. Friend, who has moved the Second Reading of the Bill, when he says we do not want to have this question discussed any longer. We have found that our claim has been recognized by a Liberal Government for some subvention in the interests not only of my country, but in the interests of the whole kingdom, and I say that Her Majesty's Government cannot do a wiser or more simple act than to grant us what we ask for in this Bill. By taking that course they will not only be conferring a blessing on Wales, but will be doing that which we believe will prove a great blessing to England also. It will be an experiment that will lead the way, I sincerely believe, to a system of practical training in Science and Art which will enable us to maintain the proud position we have always maintained of being the greatest manufacturing and commercial nation in the world.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Mid Lothian): Sir, I should feel some scruple in availing myself of your permission to address the House after the Mover and Seconder of the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill, inasmuch as I intended to follow in their footsteps, were it not that I do not regard the measure as raising a question on which Parties in this House are sharply divided; and I do not consider it my function to address any reproach or criticism to the existing Government in relation to the subject, although I should be very glad if I were able to make an appeal to them that would appear in their eyes to have any weight or value. But, Sir, I must also say that I am governed by the consciousness that it is not necessary for me to enter at any length upon a discussion of the Bill, for my desire may be almost summed up in the declaration that I wish to echo the speeches of my two hon. Friends who have just addressed the House, and to add any

influence that can be added to their statements, by my bearing witness to the truth and reasonableness of those statements. I must own that I never approach a question of this kind without feeling that this House ought to bear in mind, in dealing with a Welsh question, one of the considerations which ought, at all events, to recommend a temper of indulgence and liberality, and that is, the unquestionable neglect of Wales, which has for a long period marked the legislation of this country. It may be said this has been the fault of Wales; but if that is so it means that Wales has not pushed her claims with as much energy as she might have been justified in using. There has not been in Wales the same amount of active sympathy between the upper and lower classes which happily prevails in England. It seems, perhaps, strange to speak of the neglect of Wales at a moment when within the last 12 hours the House of Commons has been engaged in an interesting debate on a matter vitally touching considerations connected with Welsh nationality. I only wish to put on record my belief that the whole annals of Parliament do not, so far as I am acquainted with them, furnish a single case in which, on two successive days, Parliament has been occupied with two successive subjects, both of the highest interest to Wales. It may be hoped that this is a sign of coming improvement. I do wish to point out one thing. Measures have been taken with regard to Wales which were well-intentioned, but which have not been beneficial in what I may term a modified but real sense to the national interest—I refer to the foundation of Jesus College. So long as full justice was done to the Welsh language, to Welsh hopes, customs, ideas, and wants, my opinion was that the foundation of a college of that kind might have been beneficial. But very shortly after the foundation of Jesus College came the Revolution, and however beneficial that was to the general liberties of this country, it was anything but beneficial to the local wants of Wales. From that time down to the reign of Queen Anne there was a determined policy of Anglicizing Wales by force, by means of occupying every post with English-speaking people who were totally incapable of, or, at all events, who remained entirely without the faculty of understanding the language or gaining the sympathies of the people of the country. This college, which was well and wisely planned, although producing many able and distinguished men, has, I am afraid, operated on the whole as a means of detaching from Wales, instead of attaching to the Principality, many of the most prominent of her sons. I hope that the House will look liberally at this question; and as regards Her Majesty's Government, I cannot apprehend that there is any reason why they should oppose the Second Reading of the Bill, which, in its most essential points, corresponds with a Bill introduced by a former Government, and which it was understood embodied principles on which both sides of the House were agreed. I am aware there is a point of great importance—namely, the introduction of a local authority—on which there may be, although I hope there will not be, a difference of opinion between us. Now, Sir, for my part I believe the Mover of the Second Reading was quite right in saying that from his point of view the introduction of the local authority, which we did not formerly possess, is vital to the well working of the Bill, and that consequently he would not be prepared to take the responsibility of putting the Bill forward unless that authority is introduced. Even if the Government do object to the authority—and I know of no reason why they should do so—the proper time to discuss the matter, and, if necessary, to take issue upon it, is in Committee, when the House has formally assented to the principle of the Bill. This remark will probably apply also to other important provisions of the Bill. This would be far better than that an issue should be hastily raised on the Second Reading of the Bill. Now, Sir, I cannot leave this question without bearing my testimony to the truth of the statements that have been made with regard to the claims of Wales upon this subject. No one can examine the votes of the House with respect to Ireland and Scotland without seeing that, so far as claim is concerned, that proposition neither requires nor admits of argument. Whether Scotland or Ireland have had justice may be open to debate; but at all events Ireland has had something, and at all events Scotland has had some-

thing, while Wales has had nothing. Until the question of Aberystwith College came into view that was mathematically true. That College owes its origin to action which, if ever there was a popular movement, was the result of a popular movement. There was no power able or disposed to raise that College except what sprung simply, purely, and directly out of the hearts and affections of the people. Upon that testimony to the want and the desire of the Welsh people to supply that want I think my hon. Friend might have been content to let the willingness of the people of Wales to help themselves rest. There is no severer test of popular desire than that accepted by my hon. Friend, who is willing to suspend his Measure and say nothing shall be done except in conjunction with that form of effort on the part of the people of Wales—effort such as they have made in respect to the College of Aberystwith. Now, we hear in the case of Aberystwith College that which I heard long ago with great interest and satisfaction in regard to the University at Athens. Not only the youth, but the grown men and even the graybeards of Greece went to Athens to obtain education at that University. Now, what is there in the way of the acceptance of this Bill? I am, I hope, resorting to unnecessary suppositions. I have no reason to suppose that the Government intend to resist the endowment of the Welsh County Councils with functions proposed to be given by this Bill. Let the House, if possible, after all these long years of neglect, with a considerable sum at their debit which they ought, if possible, to efface, and a certain amount of discredit to Parliament which they ought to counterbalance—at all events at this stage do that which they cannot do without the help of the Government, and by assenting to the Second Reading go as far as they can in supporting the Bill. Unquestionably there is between us a large amount of concurrency. Such a course will not commit the House to more than this—that they admit there is a considerable case of justice and practical necessity for taking some positive measures now. I am not aware of anything in the nature of this subject which ought to make the House contemplate with satisfaction, or even with toleration, any postponement of it. I believe with my hon. Friend that the Government would do a prudent thing in carrying the measure forward, as by doing so they would escape what might otherwise be a series of interminable debates.

*MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon): I rise principally to point out how practical effect can be given to the suggestion just made by the right hon. Gentleman. I shall not detain the House by any attempt to argue the necessity for an intermediate Education Bill, or to go into the details of the present Bill, Governments representing both sides in succession have admitted the necessity for such a measure and repeatedly promised this boon, or rather this justice to the Welsh people. Now what I want to urge is that under these circumstances not only are you doing a serious injury to the Welsh people, but you are committing over again the same mistake which has brought on all our troubles with Ireland; you are proving to the Welsh people either the unwillingness or the incompetence of the Parliament of the United Kingdom to carry out what it has repeatedly admitted it is its duty to do. And it is such an unnecessary piece of folly and incapacity. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian has repeatedly told us the remedy for this incapacity is devolution of the powers of the House to Grand Committees. Cannot the Government refer this Bill to a Grand Committee, which remember is after all a miniature of the whole House, and in which the Government will have a proportionate majority. I think with all the Scotch business before the House it would be almost impossible to deal with this Bill in a Committee of the whole House, which means that 40 or 50 Members would attend regularly and do the work, while the remaining 630 Members would stream in and out and perhaps secure the insertion of Amendments which would apparently be harmless, but which would in fact make a complete mess of the whole Bill. By referring it to a Grand Committee you could ensure that it should be a safe as well as an efficient Bill; while, viewed from our side of the House, we should get the best and most thoroughgoing Bill we can expect to get while the Conservative Government is in power. If it proved defective in working, those defects could be remedied

when a Liberal Government came into power; but, in the meantime, the present rising generation of Welshmen would not be sent out into the world unprovided with those educational advantages which they desire as much as their Scotch compatriots, which they need as much and would use as well. They have, like the Scotch, being a comparatively poor nation, to go in large numbers to seek their fortunes out of their native land, and it is cruelly unjust to continue to send them out at a disadvantage as regards educational facilities, which the Scotch have so long enjoyed, which you have so repeatedly promised to the Welsh, and which they are, I repeat, as anxious for and fitted to turn to good advantage as the Scotch are themselves. Not only are you doing this injustice and neglecting this duty, but such a course is most unstatesmanlike, for you are thus creating and justifying the demand for Home Rule for Wales. When such a simple and practical remedy is in your power, by which you will confer a great benefit, secure credit to your Government, and avoid a great danger, it seems to me absolutely inconceivable that you should neglect such an opportunity. I have spoken of the thirst among the Welsh for education. Now, bearing on this, I hold in my hand a most important statistical Return of the classes from whom the pupils of our North Wales College have come. It will be evident to the House that a college is not the educational institution most available for men of the class of farmers and quarrymen, but that intermediate education is far more valuable for them. Those of us interested in education for Wales threw ourselves heart and soul into the movement for colleges, because it was the only thing we could do then and we felt sure it would necessitate the still more important provision of technical and intermediate education if introduced. But look on what the efforts of these poor men have been actually to provide the highest educational agencies for their children. The quarrymen of Bethesda—of a single quarry—subscribed £1,500 towards the establishment of the college, and though bad times came almost immediately upon them, and they had only four days' work a week, they had actually paid up within a very short time £1,000 of this amount, and not only so, but the three classes that have supplied the largest number of students for the North Wales College are, first, the farmers, whose average holding is 46 acres, who in the few years, during which it has been established, have supplied 29; next to them come the clergy and ministers of religion, who are the parents of 84 of our students, and then come the quarrymen with 23 students in the few years during which the college has been established. The fact is, that the poor Welsh farmers and the quarrymen were, in proportion to their means, the most liberal supporters of the North Wales College, putting those of us who belong to the wealthier and leisure classes to shame by the largeness of their contribution. Now, I put it to the House, whether men willing to make such sacrifices—for think what a sacrfice it must be for a quarryman to send his son to college—willing thus to avail themselves of the advantages provided, do not deserve to have the opportunities for qualifying themselves for their own work, and for work elsewhere which technical and intermediate education would furnish. And look too at the way in which the Welsh farmers have come forward to avail themselves of technical agricultural information. Why, on one market day last week, I believe the farmers in Anglesey raised £100 towards a dairy school, and I will undertake to say if Government will only back us up we will make North Wales a model of technical agricultural information for the whole country. Now, Sir, I do put it to the House; is it not simply a disgrace to us, a confession of disreputable incapacity on the part of the Imperial Parliament if we delay any longer to provide the Welsh with this education which they are willing to make sacrifices for far exceeding those called for from any part of the Three Kingdoms and to avail themselves of when provided. I repeat this is no Party question, and I do urge the Government to take this opportunity of pressing the matter forward.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): From the condition of the House I think we are likely to come to an amicable conclusion on this subject. Of one thing I am certain, and that is that no one can approach the question with a more sincere desire to

improve—to reform if you like—the educational endowments of Wales, than myself. I note with pleasure two or three observations which have fallen from the opposite Benches. I note for instance the *amende honourable* which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), and the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire (Mr. Stuart Rendel) made to Aberystwith College for the slight they threw on that institution by the proposal during the Premiership of the right hon. Gentleman to disendow it. They have now shown by their words that they still have some sympathy with Aberystwith College. I am glad that the efforts of the Conservative Party on that occasion were instrumental in preserving the grant which was then given and which is still given out of the public revenue to that institution. Now I shall criticize the Bill in no unfriendly spirit. I will approach the question in what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian describes as a spirit of liberality. The right hon. Gentleman supported the Second Reading of this Bill on the ground that Jesus College, at Oxford, has not entirely fulfilled its duties towards Wales, and that something yet remains to be done. But I observe that Jesus College and its responsibilities towards Wales will not be affected in the slightest degree by any provision in this Bill, and if I do not follow the right hon. Gentleman upon the point it is upon that account. Passing from Jesus College, I venture to lay down an axiom which I believe will be accepted on both sides of the House when dealing with the educational endowments in Wales, and that is that politics should be eliminated. But when I look at the Bill I find that the names at the back of it are only the names of Radical Members. I regret that the Radical Members for Wales have not endeavoured to secure upon the back of the Measure the names of some of those who are interested in education in Wales, but who are not of the same political opinion as themselves. There is now before the House another Bill dealing with precisely the same subject, and on not altogether different principles—the Bill of the hon. Member for the Denbigh Boroughs (Mr. Kenyon). That Bill should, I think, go hand in hand with this Bill. The two Bills are genuine and legitimate endeavours to make the intermediate education in Wales better. Why should not both side of the House shake hands upon this question? Why should we not endeavour to push forward the same object in a spirit of conciliation? I have said that politics ought to be eliminated from the question of education, but I find that the authorities who are to deal with education in Wales under the Bill are the County Councils. Now, it is well known that the County Councils in Wales have been elected on political lines entirely. Indeed, the Leaders of the Opposition invited the electors of Wales in electing County Councils to act, not on the principle of electing the best men, but of electing their own men. The Bill not only deals with education, but it amounts to an amendment of an Act which was only passed last session, the Act for the creation of County Councils. County Councils have hardly got into harness. They hardly know how they will work the business of the counties which has been entrusted to them, and yet it is now proposed to throw on the shoulders of these Councils, who are already overworked, the control of the whole of the secondary and technical education in their counties. But I am bound to say that representing as I do, to a large extent, the agricultural interest, I cannot at the present time willingly accept a principle which will place another rate upon the farmers. We have heard from the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) that the 40 acre farmers of North and South Wales are poor men. It is hard that we should place upon the backs of these men an additional rate, and I am perfectly sure, speaking as I do for the farmers of Wales and the border counties, that they will resent the imposition of another rate, although they are most anxious that as far as possible the educational endowments of their neighbourhood should be used to the utmost advantage of the people. And while the Bill may throw an additional rate upon the farmers, it also gives power to deprive the different parishes of endowments which at the present time belong to the poor, that is to say, the endowments which are intended to support and do support the elementary education of the cottager. These endowments can be swept away

from the localities to which they now belong to another place inside or outside the county, and devoted to the support of establishments for the middle classes, who are much better able to pay for the education of their sons than the poor men are able to pay for the education of theirs. The Bill upon this subject which was introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) was scouted out of the Principality because it was considered to be a Bill which entailed the robbery of the poor. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] The right hon. Gentleman knows quite well that his Bill met with so little favour in Wales, because it took away the endowments of the poor in order to create good schools for the upper and middle classes. This Bill errs, though not so grossly, in the same direction. No doubt, in return for taking away the endowments of the poor which are for elementary education, you say "we will give the poor man some advantage in regard to middle class education." But it is elementary education he wants; there are only a few who want middle or higher education, a few here and there who will take advantage of the new educational establishments which may be planted in towns; but the majority of cottagers will be left in a worse position than before. These are difficulties well worthy of consideration. You tax the farmer, you disendow the cottager, and at the same time you strike a blow at the existing middle-class schools in Wales and on the Welsh borders. Here I venture to point out that all along the borders of Wales are educational establishments, at Chester, Oswestry, Hereford, Shrewsbury, Gloucester, and elsewhere, all providing education of which the inhabitants of Wales avail themselves, for it is often very much easier to travel by railway to these border towns than to cross from one part of a Welsh county to another. It is impossible to discuss facilities for the education of the Welsh people without taking into consideration these establishments along the Welsh border and to which Welsh farmers and the middle classes send their sons for education. There is an excellent school at Oswestry which no doubt hon. Members opposite know very well, at the head of which is Mr. Owen Owen, a school which largely supplies education to the border countries, not an endowed school, but one of those excellent self-supporting middle-class schools which you ought to consider when you are apportioning rates and endowments, and setting up State schools, that you may not injure them. These schools are doing excellent work, they are exceedingly well managed, and if you strike a blow at these, you are injuring the cause of middle-class education. These are some of the objections that naturally occur to anyone interested in education in Wales, and who has read the Bill of my hon. Friend. I have mentioned the objections that arise from bringing political opinions into action in this question, and County Councils are political bodies; I have pointed out the hardship upon farmers and colliers from the taking away of endowments of elementary education, and now I turn to another point that deserves the attention of hon. Members. In all schools where there are boarders, I think Nonconformists and Churchmen will agree it is almost impossible to conduct education without inculcating some definite religious belief. It is different where you have to deal only with day pupils, for then you may omit religious teaching, because the children will receive it at home, or elsewhere. But where the school is for the time being the home of the children, there should be some definite form of religious teaching, be it Wesleyan, Calvinistic, Primitive Methodist, Church of England, or Roman Catholic. Guard it if you like by a conscience clause, as is done in some elementary schools, but there should be some definite form of religion taught. But this Bill excludes from the Board the power of allowing any definite religious teaching to be carried on in any of the schools that may be established under the Bill. I cannot help thinking that would hardly be acceptable to parents.

An hon. MEMBER: That is not so.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: Of course I cannot go into the particulars of the Bill, but I think it will be found that there is one clause which declares that any scheme relating to one of these schools, shall provide that there shall be no religious catechism or formulary

taught which is distinctive of any particular denomination. That is to say, every definite form of religious teaching is prohibited.

MR. MUNDELLA: Not in their own schools. The clause is exactly on the lines of the Educational Endowment Schools, and is exactly what is adopted in all schemes by the Charity Commissioners.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: Then I take it as accepted on both sides that no definite religious teaching will be allowed in the schools?

MR. A. WILLIAMS: No distinctive and denominational form.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: No Catechism or definite formulary of religious teaching. I do not believe that in any of the schools of Wales or England does such a state of things exist where there are boarders. It is altogether different as I have said where there are no boarders. I think most of the religious Nonconformists will feel with me this is one objection, and a very grave objection, to sending their sons or daughters to schools where such religious teaching is prohibited. These are objections to the Bill that I think are well worthy of consideration by hon. Members opposite who desire to promote, as I do, the improvement of the educational establishments in Wales. This Bill not only takes within its sweep the educational endowments of Wales, it goes much further and includes within its sweep educational establishments in England. For instance, there is a school at Ashford, near London, which has no endowment of real property in Wales, which is not for Wales but for the Welsh in London, in England, Scotland, or Ireland; it is not supported by any landed endowment in Wales; but this Bill proposes to take any from the English-Welsh,—if I may use the term,—the benefit of this establishment which is supported by voluntary effort. I think I may say without fear of contradiction it is one of the most successful middle-class schools connected with the Principality of the Welsh, and this school and its endowments would be swept within the four corners of this Bill. These are criticisms which I hope hon. Members will not think are made in a spirit of hostility to the principle of the Bill, but in the most sincere desire that we should improve to the utmost all available means of education in Wales. As a helper, not an opponent of the principle hon. Members advocate, I would make this suggestion in a spirit of conciliation, that both this Bill and that of my hon. friend the Member for Denbigh Boroughs (Mr. Kenyon) should be sent to the same Committee.

MR. MUNDELLA: There is no second Bill.

MR. KENYON: It is quite ready to be brought in.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: The Bill of my hon. Friend which he brought in last year, and which deals with the same subject to some extent, but from a different point of view—I would suggest that that Bill, which my hon. Friend hopes to obtain leave to introduce, should, with the Bill now before us, be sent to a Select Committee, and with the assistance of the report of that Committee the Government will be more able next year to deal thoroughly with this question, and in a manner which will be agreeable to the people of Wales and Members who represent Welsh constituencies. I think that will be the better course, and I have in mind the speech we have heard from the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone), who certainly represents, in the most able way, all that is best in the principles of those who are anxious to promote education among the middle classes. It is well to note that he declared there was no body less likely to come to a true, great, and fair conclusion, in regard to a Bill of this kind, than a Committee of the whole House. I do not think that, even if the Government, who I am quite certain are prepared to meet them in a spirit of conciliation and a desire to promote their wishes, allow this Bill to pass its Second Reading now, hon. Members opposite will be wise in allowing the Bill to undergo the ordeal of Committee of the whole House, remembering that the majority of the House is not in their hands in this Parliament. I think they would be wiser to allow the matter to be discussed by a select Committee and then throw the responsibity of dealing with it on the Government for next Session. This is the suggestion I offer. If hon. Members succeed in obtaining Government support and secure a Second Reading, they may be certain that in Committee very serious alterations will be

made in the Bill; it may be practically re-drafted, and possibly may not emerge quite in the form they would approve. I make the suggestion in all sincerity and with a genuine desire to promote the object which hon. Members have at heart, and I hope they may accept my proposal.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire): Welshmen have often had to complain of the neglect of Welsh affairs, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has shown to-day that our complaints are perfectly justified. But in one respect we are not neglected in Wales; the Tory border Members seem to display the most assiduous attention to our affairs. It is becoming quite touching. Last night not one of the Conservative Members who represent Welsh constituencies spoke a word in regard to a question very deeply affecting the Principality; but a Tory border Member who has some landed connection with Wales took a very deep interest in the subject, and again this afternoon we have looked in vain for the few Conservative Welsh Members. The hon. Member for the Denbigh Boroughs (Mr. Kenyon) has, it is true, appeared for a short time in the House, but the only criticisms offered come from another border Member who has returned from the uttermost parts of the earth to give us the benefit of his wisdom in two Welsh debates. We thank them for this interest. The only complaint we make—and we make it advisedly—is that they speak with the interest of outsiders, and not with the knowledge of insiders. The hon. Member, in speaking of the Bill introduced by the right hon. gentleman the Member for Sheffield, says that it was opposed, hotly opposed, by the Welsh people on the ground that it was a robbery of the poor. Now, as a matter of fact, the Welsh people have persistently, by every form of constitutional pressure, by votes of public bodies, by petitions, by resolutions of municipalities, by pledges demanded by candidates at elections, by resolutions on occasions when Members visited their constituencies, placed on record their approval of the principle of the Bill first introduced by the late Liberal Government, and now embodied in the Bill before us. If any further proof is needed it will be found in the result of the late County Council elections. We in Wales have had from time to time the benefit of personal visits from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University (Mr. Raikes) who is generally put up in this House to reply on Welsh questions, chiefly, I suppose, because during his leisure months he comes down and resides in a pretty part of Wales. He came to a Primrose League demonstration at Machynlleth, and he told us that in regard to education he looked forward to the establishment of County Councils, because from these Councils he should be able to gauge the opinion of the Welsh people on this question. We took to heart the hint of so wise and sage an adviser, and immediately it became a test question for all the County Council candidates—and in every county with one or two exceptions—Councillors were returned pledged to use their utmost influence to further the cause of intermediate education on the lines of the Bill of my hon. Friend. If further corroboration is required there is the fact that many of the Councils soon after they assembled considered this question of education, and though they had differences of opinion on some points of detail, passed unanimous votes in favour of immediately dealing with the subject. We in Wales have waited during the last eight years, since the appointment of the Departmental Committee, for the House to deal with the question. As usual, when there is an expectation of coming legislation, voluntary agencies were for the time crippled. In this case the only English central body appointed to deal with intermediate education in Wales has absolutely suspended its operations. The Charity Commissioners in 1881 wisely decided, in view of the promised legislation, to suspend action in regard to endowed schools in Wales. During these eight years secondary education has made marvellous progress in England, due chiefly to the splendid efforts of the late Mr. Matthew Arnold, who roused the attention of the country to the subject, and later to efforts of the Association for Promoting Technical Education to place the secondary education in this country somewhat on the basis of the foremost educational countries of the Continent. But while England has been making rapid progress in equipment for secondary and higher education effort in Wales has been

suspended because of the expected, and, I think rightly expected, legislation on the part of this House. Now we have been told this afternoon by the hon. Member (Mr. Stanley Leighton) that the best course will be to pass this Bill through its Second Reading, and then refer it, together with a Bill not yet introduced to a Select Committee. To that we object thoroughly and entirely. We want more information, says the hon. Member; why we have two volumes packed and stuffed with information. The Departmental Committee went all over Wales, north and south, and took evidence from all classes in every considerable town in the Principality. They examined individuals here in London; they surveyed the whole field of Welsh Education, and all the information they could gather is to be found in the evidence and in the Report drawn up by that Committee. I am not going to enter into the question of the need and the desire for some such Bill in Wales; it has been acknowledged by every speaker. I shall not enter into the question of the defective and unsuitable provision made for intermediate education in Wales, because I think that will be admitted by the Vice-President of the Council. All I desire to point out is that the objections which have been brought forward by the hon. Member—the objections brought forward by those who oppose this Bill—are without foundation. I think that hon. Members who look fairly at the Bill, and who read the evidence and the Report of the Committee, will acknowledge that it is free from objection as an extreme measure; that, on the contrary, it is very moderate, and, if anything, comes short of what the case demands. Objection has been taken to the machinery of the Bill. It is urged that we should not invoke the authority of County Councils. Now, I think that objection in the face of the legislation of last year is not worth much attention. Every Member on the Treasury Bench is surely proud of the great achievement of last year, and delighted at the prospect of its usefulness. Objection is made to the constitution of the Board of Education, a controlling Board formed of one member from each of the County Councils. But I think we have taken advantage of the Local Government Act to compose the most representative body possible for the purpose, a body that must command the support, the sympathy, and confidence of the Welsh people. This proposal for a Board of Education for Wales is no new-fangled scheme. It was proposed, and strongly urged by the Commissioners who took evidence and reported on the state of our Endowed Schools in 1867. The School Inquiry Commission made an admirable Report, and one of its chief features was the recommendation of Provincial Authorities composed of representative persons appointed to carry out a great scheme of secondary education. This was founded on the evidence of Lord Fortescue and others, who pointed to the success attending a similar plan in Continental countries. It is done in France, divided into 18 academical districts; in Prussia, divided into eight districts, for purposes of secondary education; and in that model educational country, Switzerland, the same system prevails. The Commissioners recommended that the Registrar General's districts should be taken as the basis, and Wales is one of those divisions. The Bill of my hon. Friend carries out the recommendation of the School Inquiry Commission, taking advantage of the Local Government Act of last year. The Commissioners said that no skill in organization, no careful adaptation of the means in hand to the best end could do so much for education as the earnest co-operation of the people. That object has been sought in this Bill. The hon. Member makes objection that we divert charities from their proper use and saddle the people with increased rates as a condition of State aid. I take the question of rates first. I think the hon. Member might leave us to be dealt with by our own constituents in this matter. He will not be called upon to pay any of the rates. There are 28 of us representing constituencies in Wales, and surely if our seats are to be imperilled by this increase of a halfpenny in the rates, the hon. Gentleman should rejoice at the joyful prospect of getting rid of 28 opponents. Then there is the question of the Charities. The hon. Member has brought forward what we have often heard before, namely, the allegation as to robbery of the poor. Well, we have heard the view of the hon. Member, as one who takes a great and burning

interest in the people of Wales; but we have other witnesses on this matter. Amongst those who gave evidence in 1881 were the leading dignitaries of the Church of England in Wales. One of the first of these witnesses was the late Bishop of St. Asaph. He was very closely questioned on the point and his opinion was that—

"It would be a very great advantage indeed that these doles and charities should be applied to educational purposes."

He said—

"Give them as exhibitions to poor, meritorious boys. That would be better for the district than giving the money in doles as at present."

Archdeacon Smart gave similar evidence, and for fear the statements of the Bishop and Archdeacon are not sufficient I will call the country clergy as witnesses. Take the evidence given by one of the most loyal clergymen in North Wales, the Rev. David Williams, of Llandyrnog. He said—

"I would rather see the money given to educate boys at the Grammar School than given in doles as it is now given in my parish."

The late Dean of Bangor said—

"If we are to have a State grant we should utilize to the utmost the endowments."

The Bishop of St. David's said—

"Those charitable endowments are worse than useless. Give them for exhibitions."

In face of such evidence it is idle for the hon. Member or anyone else to say that those who support the Bill want to rob the poor, or that we are rapacious Nonconformists who want to deprive people of that which is their due If there is any defect in the Bill it is that it excludes endowments of not more than £30. Those charities that are taken are hedged about with the most careful precautions care is to be taken that the poor or other particular class especially interested in the Trust shall participate in the benefit of the intermediate and technical education established by the measure. The hon. Gentleman has said that large charities are included in the Bill which ought not to be included, such as the Howell and Ashford Trusts and the Meyrick Fund. The Howell Trust was left by a Welshman for the education of boys and girls in Wales. For a time the charity, like a great many others in the Principality, was misappropriated, but in 1847 it was dealt with by the Court of Chancery. The trust had no denominational restrictions whatsoever. The Court of Chancery were free to deal with it as they liked, no "founder's intention" being attached to it, so what did they do? They turned it into a Church of England endowment, and the result is that a charity worth £6,500 a year is dedicated to the purpose of keeping two girls' schools in Wales, one at Denbigh, and one at Llandaff; there is not a single Nonconformist upon the governing body, or a single Nonconformist child, or child on the poor or working classes on either foundation. Education is given to the daughters of the professional classes, the majority, as I am told, being the daughters of clergymen. Should this £6,500 be spent upon one denomination in Wales, and that the wealthiest? I do not grudge the daughters of the clergy the best education that Wales can give them, but I do grudge that this money should be spent wholly upon the middle and well-to-do classes of one denomination, which only commands a small minority of the people. The recommendations of the Committee with respect to this charity were that the schools should be open to all Wales, that £1,500 should be given to Denbigh and £1,500 to Llandaff, and the rest for the establishment of girls schools in other parts of Wales. In order to show the hon. Gentleman opposite, or any other sceptic, what a small endowment can do in Wales, I would point out that with the endowment of £300 a year at Dolgelly splendid work has been done, practically the only public efficient high school for girls in the whole of North Wales having been established by its means. Here, on the other hand, we have the enormous endowment of £6,500 a year doing no good whatsoever to the great mass of girls in the Principality. With regard to the Ashford school, at the date of the Report 57 children were educated in it who were described as the children of broken-down English farmers.

MR. LEIGHTON: That evidence was given some years ago. What was stated of the Ashford school then is not true of the Ashford school of to-day.

MR. MUNDELLA: The hon. Member is referring to the Report of 1881.

MR. LEIGHTON: Everything has been changed since then. The Ashford School is the only middle class school in the Kingdom that has exclusively Welsh children in it.

MR. T. E. ELLIS: It is gratifying to find that there has been this increase in the number of Welsh children in the school during the last three or four years. But I think hon. Members will see what a grotesque position this institution holds for a school designed for the good of the boys and girls of Wales. Before they can obtain the slightest advantage they must leave their hill sides and valleys and cross to the furthermost corner of England. As for the Meyrick Fund, amounting to £20,000, owing to the suspension of educational efforts this trust is now doing practically nothing for the promotion of education in Wales. The last point to which I wish to refer is that the Bill asks the House to meet the efforts of the Welsh, who are ready to take upon themselves the payment of a rate for the promotion of education. The amount the Government is asked to give will depend upon the result of examinations by the Education Department. Therefore there is no need for the most rigid economist on the other side to fear that the money would be lavishly spent on the promotion of intermediate education in Wales. I think Wales may appeal irresistibly to England for help. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian referred to a fact which is as sad to us in Wales as it is interesting to the historian—namely, that the period in English history which brought Englishmen liberty and progress brought Welshmen nothing but robbery and retrogression. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian referred to the Revolution; if he had thrown his mind further back he might have referred to the Reformation. At the Reformation, owing to the suppression of the monasteries, the condition of Oxford and Cambridge was much improved. This was one of the brightest periods in the history of England, but it was one of the darkest periods in Welsh history, because our revenues went more completely into your hands. For years before the Reformation the first-charge on the lands of Wales was taken mercilessly by Sinecurists. In Merionethshire the tithes of four parishes had long been taken to support a nunnery in Essex, and at its suppression were taken not to support religion or education in Wales, but to create and build up the Bishopric of Lichfield, whilst the tithes of Strata Marcella in Montgomery were devoted to the enrichment of Christ Church, Oxford. Since the Reformation the peasants of Montgomeryshire have paid £800,000 to educate the English aristocracy at Christ Church. Even at the present day, if you look at the Tithe Commutation Return, it is interesting to find that the counties of Wales one after another have to pay tithe either to large English educational bodies or to support English Bishoprics and English Deaneries. South Wales alone has had to pay £14,000 a year in this wise. Thus the period which marked so striking an advance in English education was one of degradation and impoverishment for Wales. If even a tithe of this money which Wales has had to pay out of its public revenue for English purposes had been devoted to Welsh purposes, we should have had an educated clergy, colleges for the higher education, and good parochial schools for the peasantry of Wales. No wonder Judge Johnes wrote in 1832:—

> "Whatever in the present day may be urged in defence of these abuses, they are still—what they were at first—mere remnants of servitude—an unjust tribute wrong from a poor country, to swell the wealth of one already opulent—a tribute not like that of wolves' heads which King Edgar is said to have exacted from our forefathers—but levied on the virtue, intelligence, and civilization of our land."

The first opportunity the Welsh had of building up a system of education was eagerly grasped. The statistics of the Education Department will show with what zeal and passionateness the people of Wales set themselves to carry out the provisions of Mr. Forster's Act of 1870. In the establishment of the three Colleges at Aberystwyth, Cardiff, and Bangor they have shown their zeal for higher education. Wales contributed £75,000 to Aberystwyth College. When the Government promised £4,000 for the South Wales College there was no difficulty in raising £25,000 from the people. How differently Wales has been treated from Scotland and Ireland! For Scotland, between 1873 and 1883 alone this House voted £409,250, for higher education, and £140,000 were voted to build the

University of Glasgow. In Ireland I find from this year's Estimates the Queen's Colleges receive £37,173, and for the building of museums, agricultural schools, and other similar institutions £41,084 has been expended, and as much as £203,700 has been spent on the Science and Art buildings in Dublin. Under the Act of 1878, £1,000,000 was devoted to intermediate education in Ireland. Surely the least Wales can ask is that you should give us this miserable pittance in order to meet the rate we are ready to take upon ourselves. And now I think I have dealt with all the objections which have been brought forward on the other side of the House. The only other appeal I would make is this: I should like the Government to understand how fully and deeply the Welsh people already appreciate the efforts which have been made to improve higher education. The hon. Gentleman opposite said that all these efforts were for the sake of the higher classes in Wales, but that is one of the hugest mistakes that can be made. The three Welsh Colleges that have been established have done a magnificent work for the labouring classes and the small peasants. I could give many instances where boys have risen from the humblest positions. Almost within sight of my own home there is a farmer farming about 30 acres. His eldest boy, who at 12 could not speak English, succeeded ultimately in getting a Brakenbury Scholarship at Balliol and a Fellowship, having taken three University prizes in three successive years, whilst a brother of this lad, inspired by the example thus set him, went to the local Grammar School, took degrees in London with honours, and was now going in for moral science at Cambridge, while the third brother was at the local Grammar School exhibiting equal promise and ability. This was by no means an exceptional state of things. The son of a constable was enabled to go to Oxford from Aberystwyth College and to become Professor of Greek at the South Wales College, and the son of a shoemaker had risen to the position of Professor of Moral Philosophy at the North Wales College. It may be said that being able to do so much for education no assistance is required. The enthusiasm of the people, however, wants direction, which can only be efficiently given if a national system of education is created. If we have a well-regulated popularly governed system of intermediate education established, the schools will be availed of by the sons and daughters of the peasantry and working classes. The three University Colleges will have the numbers attending them doubled and trebled, and you will prepare the way for the establishment of a real University for Wales which shall place the Principality on an equality with England, Ireland, and Scotland.

MR. A. THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.): I desire to point out that in consequence of the want of education in Wales the three colleges have not as much work for their staff of professors as they could desire. The present staff could unquestionably do twice the amount of work they are called upon to perform. We have been told that so many natives of Scotland have succeeded in getting important situations abroad owing to the old parochial system of education having given them opportunities of obtaining higher education. The Board system in Scotland, however, is doing away with much of this advantage. I know that there is a large number of men who have all the knowledge necessary for the management of collieries, but in consequence of the want of sufficient education they cannot pass the necessary examinations. If, however, we had such conditions as this Bill would bring about, they would be enabled to acquire education. I do not think there is anything upon which the people of Wales are so unanimous as upon this question of education. All the public bodies of South Wales have passed resolutions in favour of this proposal. I sincerely trust that the Government will consent to the Second Reading of the Bill and give us this small boon.

COLONEL W. CORNWALLIS WEST (Denbigh): Mr. Speaker, I second the appeal to the Government, and I wish to impress upon them that there is a very strong and united feeling amongst the Welsh Members that this Bill should be read a second time. I do entreat them to consider the position in which we have been placed for years past. We have had this intermediate Education Bill dangling before the eyes of the Welsh people for years, and we now hope to ascertain the intention of the

Government. There are points in the Bill which I confess I should like to see changed, but they could easily be considered in a Grand Committee; and the adoption of that course would, in my opinion, lead to the solution of a question which has been so long before the Welsh public. I have not risen for the purpose of criticising the Bill, but I confess I should like to see a certain number of experts in education sitting on the Education Board. I do not consider it a desirable thing that the Education Board should be left entirely and exclusively to the members of the County Council. That, however, is a detail which, in my opinion, may be settled in Committee. I do hope and trust that after we have been discussing this matter some hours, the Government will now consider it in their power to grant the united wish of the Welsh people, and that they will read the Bill a second time.

*MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS. (Cardiganshire): So far this debate has been in very marked contrast to many in which we have been engaged of late. It has been very like the celebrated Bridgworth election—all on one side, with the single exception of the speech delivered by the hon. Member for one of the divisions of Shropshire. If the observations of that hon. Member are to be taken as a true test of the strength of the objections which it is possible to urge against this Bill, then Her Majesty's Government will have very little difficulty in permitting this Bill to be read a second time. If from the Conservative point of view there are objections to various matters dealt with by the Bill, those points could be dealt with very appropriately in a Committee of the House. My hon. Friend for one of the divisions of Carnarvonshire has certainly appeared to throw some doubt upon the phrase, "Committee of the whole House," in dealing with this question. For myself, I am unable to separate this question from general legislation, and I would trust a General Committee of this House to deal with the details entirely upon their merits. I have risen, however, for the purpose of expressing my surprise that the Government have not given their views on this matter at an earlier period of the debate. If they have delayed for the purpose of eliciting the feeling of the House, then their desire has been gratified. But I should have thought that the statements made in the earlier stage of these proceedings, coupled with the departmental knowledge they must have of resolutions passed by public bodies in Wales, evince an unanimity of opinion which does not exist upon any other subject upon which the Welsh people are themselves active. Great indeed is the desire of the vast majority of the Welsh people to see a measure like the present adopted by this House. I feel bound to urge upon the Government still more than it has been urged already this absolute act of justice to Wales, not alone on account of her poverty, not alone on account of the sacrifices which the poor people of Wales have made in the cause of education, not alone because of the willingness with which they express themselves ready to endure still greater sacrifices in this cause which they have so much at heart, but because out of her endowments has been taken away that which has gone to benefit and enrich the English nation. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has said, the revenues of Jesus College have not been used with that regard to the interests of the Welsh people which would render them of that value which they ought to be to that nation; when then we consider the endowments taken from the Welsh people, it is obvious that something ought to be done by the Government of the country, whether Conservative or Liberal, by way of recompense and restitution. The right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Mid Lothian said that in the past the wealthier classes and the landowners have had much to answer for in the lethargic attitude which they assumed with regard to promoting the interests of education in Wales. It is seldom I have the pleasure of apologising for or justifying the action of the wealthier and landed classes in Wales, but I hope I may be allowed to say that some of the wealthier noblemen in Wales are exhibiting signs of awakening to a proper sense of their duty in this direction. Lord Bute, Lord Powis, and others would find fresh stimulus to their efforts if there was a really national system of education established in the country. The effect, too, would be great upon the inferior gentry of the

country, whose activity would be increased in remedying the defects which are justly chargeable against their predecessors. I do not intervene in the debate further than to comply with what seems to be the desire of the Government—namely, to elicit from each and all of the persons acquainted with this subject a declaration of their views. Apart from my position in this House as representative of a large constituency—from amongst whom, peasants and small farmers though they are, have come some of the proudest examples of self-sacrifice in the cause of education—I have in the course of my life had very much to do with educational matters. For myself I was originally of opinion that it would have been wiser to have established a system of intermediate education, and to have proceeded from the bottom up to the top. And I expressed that opinion in some evidence which I gave before Lord Aberdare's Committee. I was told that this condition of things had been forced upon us by circumstances and by the neglect of Governments. But it does not now much matter what were the views I took originally, or how far the course then adopted was justified, because we have to deal with facts as they stand. First of all, the want appears to be admitted. There is no voice in Wales to contradict that, and there can be none. The desire of the Welsh people for education cannot be surpassed by the inhabitants of any country in the world. The sacrifices which poor farmers and peasants and others have made have been rightly held up to the admiration of this House. They have been written about and talked about, and there is no possibility of minimising them or making them in any respect less deserving of admiration than they ought to be. The people are willing to make sacrifices in the future, as evidenced by the proposal introduced into this Bill with regard to their subjecting themselves to a rate. The Welsh people are, therefore, well entitled to sympathy and consideration, and the testimony of their representatives is less open to objection than the testimony of the hon. Gentleman who spoke from the other side, who does not represent a Welsh constituency. Wales, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian said, has had nothing for years, and she suffered the robbery of her endowments for education in England, and she has never had compensation given her by the English Government. She has had very little in comparison with what in justice she ought to have had, and what the Welsh people wish to have. Therefore, there seems to be a claim which is undisputed on her part. There is a universal desire that the educational wants and necessities of Wales should be supplemented. Then, I ask, what is the objection; where does it proceed from? What is it the Government want in order to induce them to make up their minds to concede the Second Reading of this Bill, reserving to themselves the correction of anomalies and details, in Committee, when this measure can properly be discussed in detail. I am aware of no objection that can be urged. The Government have now an opportunity of generously recognizing this non-political action of the Welsh people, because the question of politics or of the County Council was absolutely disposed of by the singularly fortunate quotation from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General, which was mentioned by my hon. Friend the Member for Merionethshire. If the Postmaster General represents the Government as to the question of County Councils, then there is nothing further to wait for in this direction. If the governing body is to be modified, and if experts are to be introduced, that is a detail which can be discussed in Committee, but if there are to be no alterations which will deprive the Welsh people of the boon intended to be granted to them, then in the name of all that is generous, let the Bill be passed and the details discussed in Committee. I earnestly implore the Government to meet the Welsh in their proper, modest, and just demand, and to recognize their legitimate wishes.

*Mr. BARTLEY (Islington N.): I only wish to say one word in this debate, and that is to urge the Government to allow this Bill to pass the Second Reading. Although I do not in any way pledge myself to the details of this Bill I am quite sure it is a measure that we may fairly allow to pass the Second Reading, so that we may examine afterwards the details. Those of us who have had to do with the educational

system of this country must acknowledge that Scotland, Ireland, and England have certainly received a very large proportion of money compared with Wales. I think it is only reasonable, taking that into consideration, that some such measure should be enacted. The mode of forming a Board of Education in Wales must require considerable investigation; and as regards the endowments, I think they are fairly protected, though perhaps on investigation they may be still further protected than they are. I think we should be chary, indeed, about taking away endowments from one district of the Principality in order to give it to another. I think that part requires more care and attention than it has received. One other word as to the borrowing power given to the Board. I think that should also be carefully considered. I have an idea that borrowing money is so easy in the present day that it may prove dangerous, and I think that it must be safeguarded in the most careful manner. Allowing for all these blemishes in detail, however, I think the measure is one which will tend to promote education, and the promotion of education means the advancement and prosperity of Wales. I do hope, therefore, that the Government will allow this Bill to be read a second time, and I hope also that some substantial measure will become law this Session.

*MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I think I never listened to a debate in this House in which such unanimity was expressed; in fact, there has scarcely been one dissentient note this afternoon. It is difficult to conceive any ground on which the Government can refuse to read this Bill a second time. I would urge upon the Government that they could not do a more conservative thing than to allow this Bill to pass into law. Everyone knows that there has been in Wales of late years very much discontent, and at times that discontent has created a great deal of uneasiness to the representatives of Wales. We know quite well that there are certain questions in which the people of Wales are very deeply interested; but while we cannot expect to get popular legislation from the present Government, there is no earthly reason why we should not have popular legislation upon this question from the present Government. The Bill is on non-Party lines, and it has not a single clause which this House might not very reasonably adopt. We have grafted it upon that great institution which the Government itself called into existence—namely, the County Council, for which the people of Wales are very much indebted to the Government. They have called into existence this powerful institution, which for the first time expresses the feeling of the Welsh people. Now, this great organ having been created, the most suitable purpose to which we can apply it is to organize a system of higher education for Wales. I wish to call the attention of the Government to the fact that we have utilized the best body that exists for organizing intermediate education on a popular basis, and I believe by this Bill we shall be able to call into existence a far more useful and practical scheme of higher education than exists in England. The great defect of the English system of higher education is that it is characterized by mediæval conditions. It is devoted almost exclusively to the study of the Classics, and English higher education has, in fact, become an anachronism; compared with that of other countries it is quite out of date. It is limited, for the most part, to turning out young men who understand Classics and can make Latin verses, and are familiar with Greek accents, but who can scarcely tell the geography of the Mississippi—of course I am putting it in rather a strong way. But I do so in consequence of the number of young men, of 18 or 19, who come from Eton or Harrow more ignorant of common things than the ordinary boy in Board Schools. The reason of this is that English higher education was framed ages and ages ago under mediæval auspices. But by the Bill before the House we shall create in Wales a useful, popular, and practical system of education in thorough sympathy with the ideas of the present day. My belief is that, if fair play is given to this scheme, we shall see in Wales a class of middle-class schools and a class of upper schools really much superior in practical value to those which we now have in England. I will not take up the time of the House further, because we are all of one mind; in fact it is difficult to suppose that any valid argument can be offered against it at

all. I will just say, in conclusion, one thing—that, if the Government wishes to give a check to the Home Rule feeling in Wales, if they wish to support their principle of maintaining the unity of the United Kingdom, they could not do a wiser thing than assent to the Second Reading of this Bill.

*Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE (Dartford): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have listened with unusual interest to this debate, and with reference to the opening remarks of the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading of this Bill, I think I have little to criticize and very little with which to disagree. Although it is not long that I have been mixed up with educational affairs, yet not only from my own personal acquaintance with Wales, made during visits of many weeks on different occasions, but from the records of debates in this House, and from other evidences which are undeniable, I find it impossible not to recognize this one fact which stands out in bold relief—namely, that there is a special demand for education in Wales, and a special demand for the completion at an early date of what we call the "ladder" system, whereby all classes of Wales may have the advantage of a good and thorough education, leading up to the Universities. Well, Sir, I admit all that to the full, and beyond that I think I may make this further admission, that it will be impossible for anyone carefully to read the Departmental Report of 1881 without also coming to this conclusion, without blaming the want of generosity of those who came before us, that Wales compared with England is lamentably deficient as regards any local endowment which may be applied to intermediate education. The Committee in distinguishing between England and Wales—though I desire to distinguish between them as little as possible—give a careful summary or analysis. They say that while the endowments of England for educational purposes amounted to £2,167,200 per annum, the sum available for like purposes in Wales amounted to only only about £31,672. We are, therefore, all agreed, I think, that the supply to Wales of such education as that for which this Bill embodies provisions is an insufficient supply. And I must go a little further yet. In the Report to which I have referred there is another very important statement with respect to the position of Welsh endowments—I allude to their denominational character. I am not going to utter a word in this debate which can disturb its harmony. I am not going into the question of denominational endowments, but I think it fair to cite the statement of the Committee in regard to them. Although the sums available for intermediate education in Wales are small enough, yet there has been, up to this date, I believe, a very serious restriction of the sum available from the Educational Gift, on account of the denominational character of the governing bodies. The Report says:—

> "It may, therefore, be sufficiently assumed that the Welsh grammar schools are generally, so far as regards their legal status, undenominational; but, while legally and nominally non-denominational, they are, with few exceptions, practically in the hands of one religious body, constituted of what is comparatively a small minority of the population."

I think it right to allude to this passage, because I am quite aware of the efforts made by the late Government to deal in some sweeping manner with religious endowments; but, at the same time, so far as I am concerned, I am bound to accept the statement of this Committee signed, as it is, by some of the ablest men who have ever discussed this education question. One especially I may mention, long an honoured Member of this House, Lord Evelyn, and I could not quote the name of anyone who took a more prominent interest in the education of Wales. Well, Sir, so much with regard to the position of Wales to-day. If the House will bear with me, I should like to allude for a few moments to the Bill before the House. Her Majesty's Government have had many challenges made to them, and many demands made upon them—demands not restricted to one side or the other of the House—to approach this Bill, at all events, in a generous spirit, and not to exercise the majority they have at their command against it in any harsh sense. I must own that personally I do feel some difficulty in assenting to the Second Reading of this Bill; but, although I do feel that considerable difficulty, yet I am bound to acknowledge the spirit in which this debate has been conducted.

Appeal after appeal has been made to Her Majesty's Government from the other side of the House that this question should at all events be treated in no Party spirit. Her Majesty's Government have also had a very powerful appeal made to them by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. And I do not for one instant wish that we should be considered as going back from the practical pledge given by my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) some time ago, when he was asked to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, and I admit to the full the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government with regard to intermediate education in Wales. We are practically pledged to deal with it, and that as regards any other measure before the House dealing with the same subject, that pledge is equally binding. Having stated the position of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the Bill, I am prepared on behalf of the Government to meet the challenge of the right hon. Gentleman opposite to concede the Second Reading in an equally candid spirit, making the uttermost reservation to ourselves, however, in respect of some of the most important and essential details of the Bill. But in allowing the Second Reading we are at the very outset of the discussion met with the very practical difficulty of the new governing body set up by its provisions, and who are to put the measure in operation. So far as I can study the history of this question by the light of previous authorities, I think it only fair to point out that this question of the governing body is not an easy one to settle. In no critical spirit, but in a spirit of common fairness, I would point to the considerable changes effected in successive authorities by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella), when attempting to deal with this question of intermediate education. In 1884, the right hon. Gentleman drafted a Bill investing the existing Charity Commissioners with power to frame schemes and to receive recommendations from the County Educational Committee. Previous to that, a Bill was drafted also in the Education Department embodying the same principle, that the Charity Commissioners should be the governing body to carry out those schemes. Subsequently to that, the right hon. Gentleman, in 1885, introduced another Bill into this House, and, as I have said before, it was probably the catastrophe which overtook the then Government which prevented this Bill settling the question. In that Bill the right hon. Gentleman appointed for the first time a Special Commission, something on the model of the Scottish Commission, which deals with educational endowments, and which was practically subject to the procedure of the Charity Commissioners. These incessant changes in regard to the vital point of administration show that the subject is not one to be dealt with easily. Here we find the proposals of the then Government changing from year to year on an essentially important matter. Considering how much attention Parliament has really paid already to this question, I think it would be unfair if, in dealing with this matter, I did not ask the House this one practical question, Is it absolutely necessary, in dealing with this subject, to actually, for the space of seven years, annihilate the power of the Endowed Schools Commission? In this very report to which I have been referring I find something like a very strong protest against any such course. If I look at the Report of this Departmental Committee I find this statement:—

"By the exercise of the powers vested in the Charity Commissioners under the Endowed Schools Act, the whole constitution, character, and management of the grammar school can now be altered by the Government. The school can, if necessary, be removed to a more suitable site; the endowment can be redistributed if thought expedient, so as to make it more conducive to the advancement of education."

Not many weeks ago this House had an opportunity of expressing an opinion about the Administration of these Acts by the Commissioners, when a scheme was under discussion. That scheme was most strongly opposed by hon. Members on both sides of the House, but it had been considered with great care by the Commissioners in connection with the town of Cardiff, and the result was that it was supported by a majority of 130 Members in this House. On that evening, therefore, the House had no distrust of the action of the Charity Commissioners in administrating the Act of 1869 and succeeding Acts. I should like to quote the opinion of one or two hon. Members who deservedly have very high authority in this House and elsewhere, on these difficult and

vexed questions. If hon. Members will look at the evidence given before the Select Committee on the Endowed Schools Acts, they will find that no less an authority than the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Stockton was examined, and gave most valuable evidence. In reply to the question whether he would take the power of regulating these endowments out of the hands of the Commissioners altogether, and vest them in some Local Board, the hon. and learned Gentleman said—

"No, I would not, I would preserve the Charity Commissioners for the purpose of these educational endowments as well as for charities generally. I believe that is most beneficial."

Well, then there is another equally high authority—I allude to the hon. Member for South Aberdeen; he has been connected with the work of the Charity Commissioners, and has written some of the ablest reports upon the subject. He was examined by the Chairman with regard to Welsh Intermediate Education. The hon. and learned Gentleman said—

"I should say that *prima facie* it was rather undesirable to create a new central body. I do not see why the Charity Commissioners in their endowed schools branch should not do well enough for the central body. There is a great saving of expense and time by having the work done by the same body which have been in the habit of working over the ground previously. It has the experience; it has all the records in its possession; it has had the same kind of cases to deal with before; and it has a staff of Assistant Commissioners who are familiar with all these difficulties; and in that way it is better fitted for doing the work than a separate body would be. I do not deny that there may be some special circumstance about Wales which may deserve separate treatment, but I think it would be better to effect the object in some other way than by having a separate Commission for the purpose."

I can only say it is absolutely impossible that we can receive this measure as a settlement of the education question without reserving the full powers of the Commission. I would venture to urge that the question before us is one which is very difficult to decide in the course of a Wednesday afternoon's debate; and as I have stated before, the charges made in three measures introduced by the Government of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone), and the evidence I have spoken of, furnish conclusive proof that the portion of the Bill which refers to the formation of a Board by selection from the County Councils may require very serious revision. And, furthermore, with regard to the Board which is proposed, it has been urged that as the Government created the County Councils they are *pro tanto* and stopped from having the right to interfere with them in these matters. I am not quite sure that we can accept that situation without reserve. In the first place, the County Councils have only just been started, and it is a very serious question for us to consider whether, before they have had any experience in regard to these matters they should be made the arbiters in regard to a distinct system of education. I will even go further with regard to the proposed Board, which, as I understand, is to be made responsible for schemes which are to be referred to it by the County Councils. That is to say the County Councils are to frame plans which are to be referred to the Board, in order that the Board may decide upon and frame schemes for the good of the localities. I would point out to this House, which has had ample experience of extraordinary technicalities and grave difficulties that have constantly arisen in dealing with localities and constituencies in regard to endowments connected with the schemes brought before us, that in this case we have absolutely no guarantee that in the formation of the proposed Board, care will be taken to see that it will be composed of men who should be regarded as experts and fully capable of determining the great questions with which they will have to deal. A central authority is proposed, but the names of those who are to compose it have yet to be given to the House, and we are at the present moment without any guarantee as to whether that central authority will be in the least degree adequate to its functions. We have no guarantee that a single Member of the Board will be fitted by education and ability to hold such an office and we have heard of no one either as member of a College or University who would be willing to serve on the Board. Without desiring to raise at the present moment any question of controversy, I think it only right that I should point out that one of the results of the Bill, if it should become law, would be to sweep all the religious endowments into one vast net for the promotion of inter-

mediate education in Wales. But we are even prepared to make this sacrifice for the good of Welsh education, although we are not prepared to make the sacrifice without some guarantee that a single farthing of those endowments shall be properly represented on the proposed Board. I think it only fair to say, therefore, that if we, in response to what I admit to be the unanimous wish of the Welsh representatives in this House, are to make this sacrifice, we ought to have some such guarantee as that to which I have alluded. Now, Sir, I will say a few words in regard to the effect this Bill will have on the Endowed Schools Acts; and I think I shall be able to show that at all events in some respects, the Bill which, it appears by a simple process, will confer for seven years the powers of the Charity Commissioners on the new Board in respect of the carrying out of its provisions, will also in a material degree modify in important matters the best provisions of the Endowed Schools Acts. One of the first things that strikes one is the fact that this Bill will, for the first time, actually separate the administration of those Acts; it will cut off Wales from England as an integral part of this country, by saying, so far as these endowments are concerned, there shall be a transfer of adminstration. We have here before us a demand for educational autonomy in Wales. I was about to say that I am too fond of Wales to wish that she should be granted an autonomy, educational or otherwise; but I do think that when hon. Members come here with such a measure if they believe they have a fair claim to educational autonomy in Wales, they ought also to remember that while they are pleading, and justly so, for some relief for the miserable condition in which Wales is left in regard to intermediate and higher education, she does, at all events, stand in a difficult condition with regard to endowments and other matters connected with education, as compared with England; and that, while she might rightly make an appeal to the generosity of England, yet, at the same time, it is not right that when on the one hand hon. Members demand complete autonomy for the Principality, they should, on the other hand, demand complete command over the English Treasury.

An Hon. MEMBER: The Welsh Treasury as well.

*SIR W. HART DYKE: That is so. At the same time, what I wish to put forward is that, while I wish to see just and generous treatment accorded to Wales in educational matters, I should desire to leave the question of autonomy in the background. Then, Sir, I understand the Bill to limit the purposes of education in Wales to intermediate and technical education. This strikes me as something like a serious infringement of the object and intention of the Act of 1869, and the Endowed Schools Acts. Under these Acts there is no such restriction; they were passed for the education of boys and girls without any limitation whatever. The restriction proposed by this Bill seems to me to be a very serious one. Then, again, the Bill appears to me to abolish one of the brightest and best features of our educational system under these Acts, and one that is worthy of every support on the part of this House—I refer to the system of continuation scholarships, tenable in elementary schools. I find nothing about that in the Bill.

An Hon. MEMBER: Oh!

*SIR W. HART DYKE: Well, Sir, I am glad if I have misread the Bill in that respect; because I think that that would be a grievous fault, the effect of which would be to destroy one of the rounds in the ladder of the elementary system. While I am on this portion of the Bill I should like to join in one or two remarks that have been made by hon. Members in regard to technical instruction, and, so far am I convinced of the advantages which this measure will afford in relation to that important subject, that I have felt it much easier to make the sacrifice I am making in assenting to a Second Reading of the Bill. I regard this as a most valuable provision. I may ask, with reference to instruction in agricultural work, whether that is supposed to be included; because that is undoubtedly one of the most valuable branches of technical instruction; and I do hope that care will be taken to insert in this Bill ample provision for technical instruction in agriculture in all its branches. If I may be allowed to refer again to the administrative portion of the measure, I would point

out that it does appear to me to provide something like a dual administration. As I gather it, the proposal is that the County Councils are to frame plans which they are to submit to the Board, whose duty it will be to frame schemes founded on those plans. Now, I fancy it will be very difficult to carry out such a system as that. Some years ago the Charitable Trust Act was administered outside the scope of the jurisdiction of the Charity Commissioners in a certain sense, and from what I gather of the difficulty and delay that then occurred, I am not very sanguine as to the results of having two administrative bodies under this measure. I need hardly point out to the House that the present Charity Commissioners have full power of gaining local information on the spot. There is one very serious change proposed by the Bill in reference to religious instruction. The matter was alluded to by an hon. Friend behind me, who has, I think, rightly stated that Clause 5 does make a considerable change in the provisions of the Endowed Schools Act in regard to religious instruction. For many reasons I think that any considerable change of that kind would be highly objectionable. It might raise religious and other difficulties, which we hoped had long been buried in the past. The conscience clause of the Bill is practically the Cowper Temple Clause, which is of a much more stringent character than that contained in the Endowed Schools Act. The Bill also narrows the scope of existing exemptions from its application. I think these new proposals must be very carefully considered before a Bill of this kind is allowed to become law. Allusion has also been made to the fact that the very strong recommendations of a Committee of this House which only reported in 1887, are utterly disregarded in reference to particular classes of persons. If the hon. Member for Merionethshire (Mr. T. E. Ellis) wants any measure on this question to be popular either in Wales or elsewhere, he must see that it contains provisions which have due regard to particular classes of persons.

MR. T. E. ELLIS: I quoted to the House the opinions of two Bishops, an Archdeacon, and several clergymen in Wales, and I think that if the right hon. Gentleman will look at Subsection 4 of Clause 5 he will see that it exactly carries out the wishes of these Bishops and clergymen.

*SIR W. HART DYKE: As far as it goes, I accept the explanation of the hon. Gentleman. I must say that one approves of any scheme on this question with fear and trembling, knowing the objections that are raised in the localities and how severely any scheme is censured which does not absolutely protect the interest of particular classes. In this respect I think it is only fair to urge that the Bill is very objectionable. By repealing Section 30 of the Endowed Schools Act you lay your Bill open to the gravest objection. That Section provides that in any scheme relating to an endowment due regard shall be had to the educational interests of persons of the same class in life resident in a particular area. For that section you substitute certain directions that persons should provide not for the endowments, but for the intermediate education generally given under this Bill. I consider that, at all events, this is a matter for criticism, and we are all pledged to carry a useful and practical Bill. The criticisms I have given utterance to are not hostile to the intentions of the hon. Member, but I feel bound to point out where I think the Bill is defective, and where I believe it will be damaging to the cause we have at heart. There are one or two matters with which I would like to deal, but I am sorry to say I am at present physically incapable of addressing the House much longer. I think I have shown that this measure ought not to be hurried through Parliament, and that it could not fairly be expected of Her Majesty's Government that they should consent to the Second Reading without making some strong reservations. We have accepted the Bill because we found in the House a universal demand for some such measure. I think that the Government ought to have some freedom in regard to the future of the Bill, but I think I can promise that they will, within every reasonable limit of time, undertake to deal with this question. It has been suggested that the Bill should be referred to a Grand Committee. The Government will consider that proposal, but I do not think i

fair that they should be asked to give an absolute pledge on the subject to-day. As far as I am personal concerned, I am prepared to deal with this question in a Committee upstairs, and I do not see why there should be any objection to the adoption of that course. I think I have shown that this question is not so easy of solution as many hon. Members seem to think, and I am confident the subject may be usefully dealt with by a calm, considerate, and quiet debate in a Committee Room upstairs.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): The answer of the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council was in such a conciliatory spirit, and so far met the wishes of hon. Members who are associated with this Bill, that I am sure we on this side are all deeply grateful to him. If we have any regret at all, it is as to the concluding words of his speech, about not hurrying the measure through Parliament. I think that in the interest of the Government the right hon. Gentleman will do well to take care that the Bill should be passed this Session. I would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) on the subject. When the Government of 1885 left office, the noble Lord who preceded the right hon. Gentleman on that Bench promised that a Bill should be brought in by the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). In 1887 the right hon. Gentleman himself made some reference to it, and in 1888 he said he hoped the Government would be able to introduce a measure that year. This measure has been in the hands of three succeeding Governments. It has been before the House for the last seven years, and the case is so overwhelmingly strong that it is almost unnecessary to add a single word in support of the able arguments adduced from both sides of the House. While admitting that the Bill should be read a second time, the right hon. Gentleman has made a few criticisms upon it, which I shall have very little difficulty in dealing with. He said that in the light of the previous efforts we had made by the Bill of 1884 and the Bill of 1885, there was more difficulty about the local bodies and authorities by whom the schemes should be formulated than we seem to suppose. For every word and line of the educational part of this Bill I am responsible, and if I have any misgivings about it, it is that the provisions are, if anything, too moderate, and hardly adequate for the educational destitution of Wales. But with respect to the administration, in the Bill of 1884 the Charity Commissioners were left to frame the schemes, and in the Bill of 1885 we substitued for the Charity Commissioners a Committee of Welshmen. Why has that change been made? The difficulty of the Departmental Committee who reported on the question was that there was no local machinery in existence to which you could commit either the initiation or the framing of the scheme. For more than 20 years we have been lamenting that for the purpose of intermediate education we have had no Local Authorities. Mr. Matthews in all his writings has spoken of the absence of municipal institutions in the counties and rural districts of England as being the great difficulty in dealing with intermediate education. We have now called this machinery into existence. The Government have given us County Councils, and the County Councils are in touch with the Welshmen. It is just on that account that we have substituted the County Councils for the Charity Commissioners, and for the very cumbrous machinery which we were obliged to improvize. We have now an Elective Authority, and to that body we propose to commit this question. But there is something very much more important than any opinion of ours as to the value of the Local Authority. The Schools Inquiry Commission reported on the necessity and the importance of these Local Authorities. They say—

> "The necessity of dealing with schools in groups seems plainly to imply the corresponding necessity of Local Provincial Boards to deal with them."

That is exactly what you have brought into existence. The Commission go on to say—

> "The expediency of having such Boards has been strongly pressed upon us by several important witnesses."

And they remark that local opposition

to many changes would probably diminish, and perhaps disappear, if a considerable district, such for instance as a county, were handled by itself, and the endowments were administered for the benefit of that county. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to speak with fear and trembling lest what he and the Charity Commissioners might do should be out of harmony with the wishes of the locality. Does that not prove the necessity of importing local opinion into the question, and giving to the Local Authorities the dealing with these schemes? The Commissioners say, further—

"If you set up these Boards they can inquire into all important endowments on the spot, and give every person interested an opportunity of being thoroughly heard. If in any substantial degree the Board represents the people, it carries a force with it, which it is impossible to secure in any other way."

I cannot conceive anything more forcible than the arguments adduced by the Schools Inquiry Commission for entrusting to Local Authorities the dealing with intermediate education. But then we have another very good example of what can be done without distrusting the the Charity Commission. Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of what was done under the Scotch Endowments Act of 1882? We did not import the Charity Commission into that Act, but appointed a Commission of seven Scotchmen, who revised the whole of the endowments of Scotland. The endowments of Scotland were at that time something like £300,000 a year, but in Wales we have only to deal with £31,000. The importance of importing Local Authorities into the question, is that the Local Authorities may, in the first instance, say where the schools are to be placed, what is the necessity of the locality, how the schools are to be grouped, and where there is most demand. That is the first operation of the County Council. As to the framing of the schemes, the right hon. Gentleman must know that in the case of Scotland that was not done by the Commissioners. Applications were submitted to them by the Local Authorities, a legal secretary was appointed, who drafted all the schemes and brought them into shape, and then the schemes were submitted to the Education Department.

Mr. Mundella

That is exactly what will happen in the present instance. The right hon. Gentleman objected to this proposal on the ground that these gentlemen may not represent one farthing of the endowment they may have to deal with. In that respect he is entirely mistaken, because it is proposed that the initiatory step shall be taken by the localities, and that then the matter shall be dealt with by the Board, on which there is one representative from every locality. The right hon. Gentleman went on to deprecate such an idea as separating Wales for educational purposes. [Sir W. HART DYKE: I would rather not.] But how are you separating England and Wales for educational purposes? You have separated Scotland from England for educational purposes, and very much to the advantage of Scotland. I am sure the House has no conception of the striking contrast there is between the condition of Scotland and that of Wales. Amongst the gentlemen who conducted the inquiry in Wales there was only one Welsh Nonconformist, and that was the late Mr. Henry Richard. We felt we had not only to deal with the people of Wales, but we had to satisfy the House of Commons of the strength of the case, and it was the most overwhelming case that was ever brought before the House. At that time, the whole endowments of Wales for intermediate education were only £15,000 a year; the entire endowments, educational and charitable, were less than one single endowment in the City of Edinburgh, the Heriot Endowment. There is nothing comparable to the destitution of Wales as regards intermediate education in any country in Europe, unless it be in Spain. The Commissoners reported that, whereas there ought to be 16 per 1,000 under education in secondary schools in England and Wales, in Wales there was only 1 per 1,000. Scotland is separated from England exactly in the way we propose to deal with Wales. Although we have not given Scotland intermediate education, we have given them the School Board, and many Members have referred to the large amount of money that has been given, and is given annually from the Exchequer to Scotland. In Scotland there is a system of education under popular control. It is by no means confined to elementary

education. There is no such word as elementary in the Scotch Education Act. They would not have it. The Scotch receive grants not only for elementary education, but under the Scotch School Boards there is a system of secondary education regularly carried on and subsidized by the Scotch Education Department from the Exchequer. I have heard from three out of the four principals of the Scottish Universities that the number of youths who come to the Universities of Scotland from the School Board Schools is increasing every year, and that every year the youths are better equipped for University work. There are grants given in Scotland for Greek, Latin, and mathematics, which grants are not permitted in our English schools. They passed their own Technical Education Act, their high schools are under the control of the School Board, grants are made in aid of the common good of the high schools of Scotland. There is more than that; examination and inspection of the whole of the endowed schools and secondary schools of Scotland is conducted partly at the expense of the endowment and partly at the expense of the Government. At this moment there are leaving examinations instituted for the youth leaving school. These leaving examinations, conducted by University examiners paid by the Government, admit the youth of Scotland without any further examination to the Army, to the Writers to the Signet, to Solicitors, to the Supreme Court of Scotland, to the preliminary for the Universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and St. Andrew's, the General Medical Council, the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, and the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. The First Lord promised last year in debate that he would at the earliest opportunity give to England and Wales everything that had been given to Scotland, but I am afraid we shall find the testimony of *Hansard* against him. We shall bring *Hansard* into the witness box to prove what are the concessions and what are the promises. But even if there were no promise, on what principle can you refuse to Wales and England what has been given to Scotland? Why should there be one system of education on the other side of the Tweed and still another when you cross the Dee? This educational destitution in Wales is a disgrace and a scandal to Parliament while you have a system in England and Scotland to raise children to the front in every branch of service and to equip them properly for the discharge of the whole duties of life. Scotland has had for her high schools during the last ten years £40,000 in grants and £100,000 in buildings, and in the next ten years will get a great deal more for grants in addition for University subjects, for Latin, Greek, and mathematics. The youth of Scotland are passing from the Board schools into the Universities, and yet you hesitate about what you should do for Wales. The right hon. Gentleman agrees to the Bill having a Second Reading, but I am not quite sure whether it is to go to a Committee upstairs or not. As to the Bill of the hon. Member for Denbigh Boroughs that will be of no service whatever. for it does not give the power of rating, and only gives a lump sum of £300,000, which, at the Chancellor of the Exchequer's calculation of rate of interest, gives something like £8,000 a year, and that would do very little indeed for intermediate education in Wales. The sum which is mentioned in the Bill is a grant equivalent to a rate which would not exceed a halfpenny. The grant is to be equal to the amount of the rate which I may estimate at £15,000, making with the grant £30,000 a year, and this with the addition of endowments would give some £35,000 for intermediate education in Wales. This will do little for scholarships, and will leave plenty of scope for voluntary effort to supplement Government aid. There is no need to thrash out this question. It is so self evident, so strong a case, every word adduced on this side has only met with a responsive echo on that, there has been no contradiction of a single fact or statement. The Bill will admit of no denial, there is no justification for its refusal, and I believe if the Government do not take up the Bill and pass it into law speedily, it is a subject that will have to be dealt with hereafter; a much stronger measure than this will have to be introduced, and it will add force to the demand for disestablishment and disendowment which we discussed last night.

*Sir HUSSEY VIVIAN (Swansea District): I am quite sure that when the words uttered by the Vice President of the Council are read in Wales to-morrow they will be received with the greatest possible satisfaction. It is, I may say, the first ray of hope that has come to Wales from the Conservative Party. I have on many occasions recommended the Conservative Party to in some way conciliate Welsh feeling, and I hope and believe that the course now about to be pursued will in a great measure do that. For the first time the Conservative Party are coming forward to do justice to Wales in respect to its education. The Vice President used these words: "We are all pledged to carry the measure;" and that is highly satisfactory to us. Further, he went on to say he criticized the Bill in no hostile spirit, and that assurance we willingly accept. But he also said he would promise within a reasonable time to deal with this question. Now, I am a very old Member of this House. I have sat here for 37 years, and I have heard such promises made on many occasions. I know how frequently it is impossible for Governments to carry out the promises they make, though at the time they make them they earnestly desire to fulfil them. The only question at issue at the moment appears to be this, and what I am anxious that the First Lord should carefully consider is this—whether the Government cannot send this Bill, not to a Select Committee upstairs, which is simply the mode usually adopted for shelving a question, but that we should send it to the most practical engine I have ever seen for forwarding legislation—a Standing or Grand Committee. Remit this Bill to such a Committee as it stands, not mixing and muddling it up with any other Bill, as has been suggested; send it to the Standing Committee with a view to passing it this Session, and that would be really carrying out the words we have hailed with so much delight from the Vice President, "That we are all pledged to carry through this measure." Then, I think, for the first time, we shall feel that our reasonable aspirations are likely to be satisfied. Time is running on. It is many years since this question was brought before the House for the first time, and it admits of no delay. The educational destitution of Wales is admitted on all hands. All the questions the Vice President has raised can be fully met by the Committee upstairs, and there is not one of those questions that cannot better be threshed out there than in Committee of the whole House. It is the most practical mode of dealing with such matters of detail, and I am sure they will receive full and judicial consideration. It must be borne in mind that there is nothing to investigate; we have all information provided by the inquiry and Report of a most admirable Departmental Committee; we have nothing to learn; all that is wanted is to come to a decision. County Councils are very proper bodies to exercise influence in this matter; they are the representatives of the ratepayers, and the great bulk of the funds to be raised will come from the rates. What more proper tribunal than this elected by the ratepayers? If you want to fence in existing endowments which unfortunately are very small in Wales, fence them in, guard them in some other way, but at any rate let the representatives of the ratepayers, the County Councils, control the expenditure of the money which is collected from their constituents. I will only say I hail with very great satisfaction the statement of the Vice-President. The debate has been conducted in a manner that does great credit to the House. For once we have put aside miserable narrow party feelings, and gone straight to the point; let us go further and signalize the Session by passing a measure of justice for Wales, which will also be a benefit to the whole country.

Mr. A. DYKE ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham): I do not rise to continue the debate, but living in Wales, being Member of a Welsh County Council, I should like to express my gratitude to the Government for their one step forward in the matter. Although the First Lord has not carried out fully the moderate promises he made in the House last year, I accept what has been done to-day as a most important instalment. Nobody can doubt the infinite importance of secondary education to Wales, and we, who are anxious to forward technical education, look upon this as going to the root of

the matter. I sincerely hope that the Bill will soon pass, and I have no fear that by the action of the County Council it will be other than a great benefit to the cause of education.

*MR. G. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): There is only one point I wish to call attention to. I agree with what has been said by the hon. Baronet behind me, that reference to a Select Committee is sometimes an expedient for shelving a Bill, and I object to this Bill being so referred. But I equally object to it being sent to a Grand Committee, and indeed I do not see that there is a Grand Committee to which we could refer it. We have no Grand Committees upon Education, and it is neither a Trade Bill nor a Law Bill. Putting that aside, however, I have had some experience of Grand Committees. I was Chairman of one for three months last year and I am engaged on another in the same capacity again this year. While I fully admit that the machinery of a Grand Committee is admirably adapted to a certain class of Bills, such for instance as the Weights and Measures and the County Courts Bills, I believe it to be quite unfitted to deal with such a Bill as this. I hope my hon. Friend will refer the Bill to Committee of the whole House and no other.

SIR CHARLES LEWIS (Antrim, N.) rose.

MR. T. HEALY (Longford, N.) rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr: Speaker withheld his assent, and declined then to put that question.

*SIR C. LEWIS: I have no intention of intruding on the general question to which the Bill relates, but I have an interest in the attendance of Members on Grand Committees. To these Committees Government Bills are referred, and to them the work of such Committees is usefully applied; but I must protest against private Members being unduly worked by having Bills introduced by private Members relegated to these Committees. I do not wish to detain the House beyond making my protest against Standing Committees being unduly worked in matters of this sort.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I think the House must admit that the Government have endeavoured to meet the demands of hon. Gentlemen in the fullest, frankest manner, and have expressed their desire to provide a system of intermediate education for Wales. They have gone beyond the expression of that desire in words, they have given indication of it by agreeing to the Second Reading of this Bill. But it would not have been frank on their part if they had not also stated the objections they entertain, to the machinery of the Bill, and it was only fitting they should do so. We have stated our objections, and I think it must be admitted those objections are of a serious character, and that they will require the most careful consideration of the Committee to which the Bill may be referred. The House will realize this position. The Government are responsible for the setting up of the Committee, which is absolutely necessary to the operation of the Bill itself. The Bill cannot pass through Committee of the whole House unless the Government set up that Committee; they are therefore responsible in an unusual degree for the Bill of a private Member; they cannot simply refer the Bill to Committee, they must take the responsibility as a Government of saying the machinery of the Bill is satisfactory to them. I hope the House will see we are not raising a merely technical objection. We must arrive at the conclusion that the shape in which the Bill stands when it passes through Committee, so far as the operative clauses are concerned, is what we can conscientiously accept, and only then can we be in a position to set up the Financial Committee. Now the question arises how we may best, carrying out the spirit in which this debate has been conducted, arrive at a solution of the difficulties presented. I am under the impression that the best method would be by a strong Committee upstairs. Time does not allow of all the clauses of the Bill being satisfactorily thrashed out in Committee of the whole House. I shall, therefore, strongly recommend hon. Gentlemen to accept the suggestion I now throw out that between this and the day that will now be named for Committee stage, an understanding should be arrived at with the Govern-

ment as to the method of procedure upstairs, whether by Select Committee or Grand Committee. An objection has been made that there is no Grand Committee to which the Bill might properly be referred; but with the desire which I believe there is to meet each other fairly, I think we might arrive at a method of procedure that will solve all difficulties. In the interest of the endowments we must protect them from injury, it is a question of the educational wants and necessities. The Board must be qualified to deal with the educational interests of Wales, and we think that the suggestion that the Councils alone shall have the power of presenting Members to the Board of Education is not sufficient or satisfactory to secure the educational capacity of the Board itself. I make no reflection on members of County Councils for Wales, but it must be obvious that the County Councils were not constituted in the first instance with the idea that they should be educational authorities; that was not one of the conditions under which they were elected, and the proposal to cast the duty on them now must be seriously considered. But the desire of the Government is that the Bill should pass, and this year. We desire to meet the wish we know exists in Wales in this direction. It has not been possible, owing to the pressure of other matters, for the Government to introduce a Bill on the subject, but we are glad to take the opportunity this measure offers, and make this a satisfactory Bill. I hope we shall arrive at an understanding with hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the procedure by which we shall ensure that the most important part of the Bill, the operative machinery, is such as we can defend and will operate beneficially to the whole Principality. I will not occupy time now. I only desired to make our position clear.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed for Wednesday.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 17).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading, read.

Sir Charles Lewis

Mr. MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I take advantage of the moments remaining to move the Second Reading of this Bill. Its principle is simply to assimilate the law in Ireland to that in England. Three times it has been before the House, and with the consent of both the Liberal and Conservative Parties has, on a former occasion, received a Second Reading. It is no novelty, and I shall be acting best for the interest of the Bill in the short time left by simply making the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*Sir C. LEWIS: It is not quite a seemly proceeding to have this Bill flung before us, to be hurriedly disposed of without any explanation of its contents [*Interruptions*]. The Bill is of a very important character, and contains much in the direction of a political and social revolution. I do not know that the action of Town Councils in Ireland for the past ten years have been such as to induce us to extend the municipal franchise. In my opinion the disgrace of the municipal franchise in Ireland, is that it is too low, rather than too high. Hence it is we see Town Councils passing resolutions which dishonour the Constitution, insult the Crown, and do everything possible to bring about a state of chaos in which one party in Ireland delights. Never during the whole course of the discussion of this proposal has there been adduced the slightest evidence, by petition or otherwise, that the people who would be affected desire the extension.

It being half an hour after five of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

MASTER AND SERVANT BILL. (No. 205.)

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir J. CORRY (Armagh, Mid.): I object.

Mr. G. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I may say I have seen all those who have raised objections to the Bill, and have arranged with them to withdraw their objections. I may also say that the right hon. Gentleman, the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) has

told me he will not oppose the Bill on behalf of the Government.

SIR J. CORRY: I withdraw my objection.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Wednesday next.

COUNTY COURT APPEALS (IRELAND) [REMUNERATION, &c.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the remuneration, subsistence allowances, and travelling expenses of any Clerks of the Peace or Clerks of the Crown and Peace, who may have additional duties imposed upon them by the provisions of any Act of the present Session to amend the County Court (Ireland) Acts.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolution [14th May], reported.

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS II.

"That a sum, not exceeding £492,562, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for Stationary, Printing, and Paper, Binding, and Printed Books for Public Departments, and for the two Houses of Parliament, and for the Salaries and Expenses of the Establishment of the Stationery Office, and the cost of Stationery Office Publications, and of the Gazette Offices; and for sundry Miscellaneous Services, including the publication of Parliamentary Debates."

Resolution agreed to.

WALTHAM ABBEY GUNPOWDER FACTORY (RE-COMMITTED) BILL (No. 175.)

Considered in Committee and reported without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 163).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I am willing to accept all the Amendments of the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), and we might have a slight discussion about numbers on the Report stage.

On the Motion of the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden, Dublin University) the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Clause 1, page 1, line 10, leave out from "or," to "made," in line 11, inclusive; Clause 1, page 1, line 13, leave out from the second "is," to "holding," in line 14, inclusive, and insert—

"Which either adjoins such holding, or, is in the opinion of the Land Commission under the special circumstances of the case reasonably required for the suitable and convenient use and enjoyment of such holding."

Clause 1, page 1, line 14, after "may," insert "if he thinks fit;" Clause 1, page 1, line 19, leave out from "except," to "direct," in line 20, inclusive; Clause 1, page 1, line 22, after "purchase," add—

"Provided always, That nothing in this Act contained shall authorize the making to any one tenant of a larger advance than that which the Land Commission is authorized to sanction to any one purchaser of land under 'The Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1885,' and the Acts amending the same."

Clause 3, page 2, line 4, to leave out "twenty," and insert "ten."

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford N.): I very much regret that the Government should have introduced this Amendment. I think they might have left it for the House of Lords to do so. If you cut it down to "ten," some noble Lord is sure to get up and say, "Let us make it five," whereas, if you leave it at "twenty" the Lords will probably only cut it down to "ten."

COLONEL NOLAN: Might I suggest that the Irish Solicitor General should say "fifteen," which would be ten Irish acres.

MR. MADDEN: I think it necessary to introduce this Amendment for the purpose of safeguarding the action of the Bill, quite independently of what may be done by persons in another place. The matter has been seriously considered on its merits, and the Government are of opinion that the Amendment already goes far enough.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Might I suggest to the Government that they should take a similar course to that which they adopted last year, in reference to another matter. There was a dispute as to whether it should be £2,000 or £3,000. The Government accepted £3,000, but put in a proviso against interference with the estate as a whole. I would say

leave in the word "ten" but add "unless in the opinion of the Land Commissioners it is expedient in particular cases that a larger amount should be granted." Perhaps before the Report stage the right hon. Gentleman could devise some words in that direction.

MR. MADDEN: I do not like to state positively either one way or the other, but I think the case the hon. and learned Member mentions is not a case in point. I think the most workable plan is to consider what is the maximum limit, and, having laid that down, to allow the Bill to work within that limit. Of course, however, if the hon. Member puts down an Amendment on Report, it will be considered, but at present the Government consider that the maximum fixed by this Amendment is the highest that may fairly and reasonably be allowed.

Amendment agreed to.

MR. MADDEN moved the following Amendment—"Clause 3, page 2, line 5, leave out from 'except,' to '1877,' in line 8, inclusive."

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I hope this Amendment will not be pressed. A tenant might have some hundreds of acres of mountain land which might not be worth 6d. an acre. Ten acres of such land would be useless to a tenant holding 100 or 200 acres of land, which is hardly of any value at all. If the Amendment were accepted, and the words "Under fifteen" left out, you might fail to relieve those poor cases where relief is distinctly necessary, not only for the benefit of the tenant but for the preservation of the Government security.

MR. MADDEN was understood to say that if on Report the hon. Member would bring up an Amendment to meet the case in point, the Government would give it every consideration.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I hope my hon. Friend will put down an Amendment on report. It is now proposed to do in a small way what the Crofters Bill for Scotland did in regard to tenure. The Crofter Commissioners had power given them to add tracts of land to the holdings of crofters under tenure, and we propose that the tenants should have power to purchase these tracts.

MR. MADDEN: I shall be glad to communicate with my colleagues on the subject if the hon. and learned Member will put down an Amendment. I will not close my mind on the matter.

Amendment agreed to.

Remaining clause (with Amendments) agreed to.

Bill, as amended, reported to the House; as amended, to be considered on Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 225.]

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT (1888) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 193)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1:—

Amendment proposed in page 1, line 15, to leave out from the words "a certificate," to the end of the Clause, inclusive, in order to add,—

"Section of one of 'The Friendly Societies Act, 1888,' shall be modified as follows:—

(a) The words 'on being satisfied that the society has been so constituted solely on bonâ fide grounds of advantage of convenience to the members thereof' shall be repealed;

(b) For the words 'transmitted to and received by the society affected thereby' shall be substituted the words 'advertised in the *London Gazette*, and in some newspaper in general circulation in the county in which the registered office is situate, and also transmitted by a registered letter to the society at such registered office.'"—(*Sir Herbert Maxwell.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put and agreed to.

Bill, as Amended, reported to the House; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

HEREDITARY PENSIONS, &c.

Copy ordered,

"Of Statement of Hereditary Pensions, Permanent Allowances, and Payments charged on the Exchequer, showing the annual amount payable under each head of charge, the sum for which the several charges could be commuted at 26·945 years' purchase, and the annual charge upon the public supposing the commuted charge to be borrowed in 2¾ per cent Consols at 99 per cent."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the table, and to be printed. [No. 143.]

House adjourned at one minute before six o'clock.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 3.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MAY 24.

An Asterisk at the commencement of a Speech indicates a revision by the Member.

Printed by Contract with H.M.'s Government.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 16th May, 1889.

LAND TRANSFER BILL [No. 67.]

Report from the Select Committee (with proceedings of the Committee), made and to be printed. Bill reported with Amendments; and committed to a Committee of the whole House; and to be printed as amended. (No. 68.)

INDECENT ADVERTISEMENTS BILL [No. 69.]

HORSEFLESH (SALE FOR FOOD) BILL [No. 70.]

Reported from the Standing Com- for General Bills with Amendments; The Report thereof received; and Bills re-committed to Committee of the whole House on Monday next; and to be printed as amended.

SAINT GILES RESTORATION (SCOTLAND) ACT AMENDMENT BILL [No. 40].

Amendments reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3ª to-morrow.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT (1855) AMENDMENT BILL [No. 50].

SECOND READING.

*LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, I move that this Bill be read a second time. The measure is a small one, and not of a controversial character. Clause 1 remedies an obvious defect in the law, a defect which considerably increases the cost of raising the library rate. The law now is that when the Library Acts are put in force in an area composed of a single parish, the library rate must be levied as a separate rate, but in every other area—*e.g.*, an area composed of two or more parishes, or of a District Board, the rate may be levied as part of some other rate, thereby saving expense in the collection. My Lords, in the parish in which I live, Chelsea, the clerical expense of levying the library rate separately is £50 a year, and in addition about £100 a year is paid to the poor-rate collectors for collecting the library rate, making a total of about £150 a year for collecting £2,500. The whole of this expense would be avoided if, as this Bill proposes, the library rate were levied as part of the poor rate, as is now the case where two or more parishes club together to put the Acts into operation. Originally a Bill to the effect of Clause 1 of this Bill was brought in by me in this House, but it was taken off the Order Book and relegated to the Commons as a money Bill. I do not know whether your Lordships will consider it advisable under those circumstances to move any Amendments to the Clause. Clause 2 is merely supplemental to Clause 1. Clause 3, which has been inserted in the Bill in the House of Commons, is new and useful. It enables parishes having public libraries to make mutually advantageous arrangements for the joint use of those libraries.

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for General Bills.

ASSIZES RELIEF BILL [No. 60].

SECOND READING.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, this Bill deals with an apparently small matter, but it is one of some importance in relation to the trial of prisoners. Down to a comparatively recent period

prisoners who were committed for trial in respect of offences which were triable at Quarter Sessions were not tried by Judges of Assize except under special circumstances, the Judge of Assize trying the Assize cases, and the Sessions cases being tried by Quarter Sessions. A clause was introduced under which it was made possible for the Judges to try or not to try those cases, and in the result they were not tried; for the consequence was that the Judge of Assize tried the Assize cases, and the Sessions cases were tried before Quarter Sessions. Owing to the change which was made the question arose as to whether the Judges were not bound to clear the gaols of prisoners whom I may call Assize prisoners, and in the result the Sessions cases have been tried as well as the Assize cases of late years at the Assizes. This has resulted in very considerable inconvenience and increase of expense. The average cost of trying a case at the Assizes is very much greater than the average cost would be of trying the same case at Sessions. One result has been that the increased cost of trying those cases at Assizes has had to be borne by the country, cases which could very well have been just as well tried at Sessions. This Bill proposes that, in future, unless a case is committed by the magistrates for trial at the Assizes, or unless the Judges consider it ought to be tried at the Assizes, it shall be tried by the Quarter Sessions, instead of being tried by the Judges of Assize. Sometimes a prisoner would be tried earlier by the Judges, but one must look at the matter as a whole, and a trial at Sessions assumes a more local character than a trial at the Assizes. This is often a matter of importance to a prisoner, sometimes as it enables him to call witnesses whom he would not be able to call if he could not afford the cost of taking them to the Assize town. That is undoubtedly a very great advantage to the prisoner. I cannot for a moment doubt that, looking at the matter as a whole, whether you look at the interests of the public in the matter or to the interest of the prisoner, the balance of advantage is in favour of the principle contained in the Bill. In such towns as Wigan and Bolton, for instance, which have their own Recorders and Quarter Sessions, prisoners would be tried before the Recorder and would be able to call their witnesses to character or otherwise on the spot, and not have to go to the expense of bringing them to the Assize town. Therefore, my Lords, I move that it be read a second time.

*LORD COLERIDGE: My Lords, in taking exception to the transfer of certain cases to Quarter Sessions, it is not so much that I object to the delay in the trial by Judges of those prisoners who are proposed to be tried at Quarter Sessions. I do not so much insist on the prolongation of the imprisonment which must necessarily take place. I agree with my noble and learned Friend that, on the whole, it is better for the prisoner that he should be tried at Quarter Sessions. But, My Lords, I wish to say that I do not like any measure which increases in any degree the liability of prisoners to be tried at Quarter Sessions. It is better that Sessions cases should be tried at Sessions; but, at the same time, I look with some jealousy upon a measure which would increase in any great degree the number of cases tried at Sessions instead of Assizes. It by no means follows that what appear to be insignificant cases may not involve difficult points of law; and all Sessions are not alike in being presided over by men who command confidence. A great many Quarter Sessions are not tribunals which anybody might desire with satisfaction to try prisoners who might equally as well be tried by the highest tribunals in the land. Still, it is rather on the score of the punishments imposed than on the difficulty of the cases which I feel it necessary to protest against too complete a relegation of cases to Quarter Sessions. I should be sorry to be obliged to lay down a principle on which sentences should be passed; but, making every allowance for differences of opinion, I affirm that, in many parts of England, sentences are passed which are enough to make one start back with amazement; and, therefore, it is necessary that rules of some kind should be laid down, not as to the character of the offence, but as to the amount of punishment which shall be ordered by such tribunals. It is a very complicated question, and one upon which differences of opinion may very fairly exist. For my own part, I should be very sorry to lay down principles, but I do say that the sentences which have been

passed at some Sessions are so startling as to justify a doubt whether it should remain possible to increase the number of such sentences, or whether it is advisable to withdraw in any degree the suggestive guidance of the more equal and reasonable sentences passed by the Judges. It is rather in reference to the punishment inflicted for offences that I should not like to see any extension of the jurisdiction of Quarter Sessions. They try their cases with rapidity, and there is no reasonable objection on that ground; but I do say again, that the sentences passed at Quarter Sessions are such as, I am certain, if they were brought before your Lordships, would startle you very much. It is a useful thing that Quarter Sessions should occasionally have the opportunity of seeing what Judges do who are entrusted with the administration of justice. Perhaps the trial of Sessions cases at Assizes might be reckoned as depriving the higher Courts of the services of one Judge, by the amount of extra labour which would be imposed upon them, but that will be a less serious matter when the Special Commission ceases sitting.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I must bear my testimony in favour of the Bill. I think the disadvantages and inconvenience of the present system have been somewhat undervalued by my noble and learned Friend. I have inquired as to the proportion of Quarter Sessions cases and Assize cases tried at recent Assizes. They are not perfect at present, but I will read some of them. Among the figures in the Return I have received are the following: East Riding of Yorkshire, prisoners tried at February Assizes, Sessions cases, 38; Assize cases, 48; Durham, Sessions cases, 8; Assize cases, 14; Newcastle, Sessions cases, 10; Assize cases, 10. I have a large number of cases, but those are specimens. The figures with regard to other places are much to the same effect. A very considerable number of cases are tried at Assizes which, in the ordinary course, would be tried by Quarter Sessions. Undoubtedly a great deal of inconvenience is caused by Judges being occupied in trying these Quarter Sessions cases and being kept away from duties more proper for them to discharge. At present, whether cases are tried at Quarter Sessions or at Assizes depends entirely on the date which happens to be fixed for the Assizes. It depends upon when the gaol delivery takes place, because, if the Sessions happen to come before the Assizes, they are tried there. That distinction exists at present by law. I think there are a great number of inconveniences at present, not the least of which is that, if they are tried at Assizes, they occupy the time of Her Majesty's Judges. There have been, more than once, complaints of Judges being compelled to go to different parts of the country simply because of their Assizes having been fixed earlier than the trials would have taken place at Sessions. There is no principle upon which Sessions cases would attach to the Assizes except by reason of the point of time. My Lords, I am also unable to concur with my noble and learned Friend in what he has said as to the inequality of sentences. I do not deny that a great many sentences strike one as somewhat distressing. The noble and learned Lord appears to consider that this present system is desirable as conducive to securing a greater uniformity of sentences, but I am bound to say that the same feeling arises in regard to sentences passed by Her Majesty's Judges. Even among Her Majesty's Judges there often appears to be great inequality in the sentences in cases apparently of the same character—and inequality not merely between the sentences of different Judges, but even between the sentences of the same Judge at different times. Sentences are passed disproportionate to the gravity of offences. But the nature of each case depends on a large number of different circumstances which make up the moral culpability of the Criminal Act, and different minds must be expected to somewhat differ on questions of this kind. So it is impossible to proceed upon any definite principle that shall be applicable to particular cases. I do not think that this point as to sentences affords any valid argument against the Bill. If a tribunal of appeal existed, greater uniformity of sentences might be induced, but it is impossible for minds of Judges not to differ as to the degree of moral culpability and the punishment to be inflicted for offences. My Lords, I think

it only right to add that I thoroughly approve of the principle of this Bill, and I should have thought it right to myself to bring in a Bill of this character; but upon appealing to Her Majesty's Judges upon a subject with which they were so much more familiar than myself, I found that among the Judges themselves there existed great difference of opinion on this matter as to the trial of Quarter Sessions cases, and I did not, therefore, bring in any Bill myself dealing with it; but, now that this measure has passed the other House, I see no reason why I should place any obstacle in its way.

LORD ESHER: My Lords, I must express my strong objection to this Bill. It is said to be intended to relieve the Judges from trying a certain class of cases. But they have no right to be relieved. They have undertaken to administer the law, and they have no right to complain. These cases do not in general take up any appreciable portion of their time. I may say that I have had some experience of going circuit, and, except on the Northern Circuit, as is known to my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack, the trial of Sessions prisoners takes up very little time. The Judges, therefore, are not injured by having to try them, and if they were injured they ought not to complain. And they do not complain. I venture to say that if the opinions of the Judges were asked there would not be a majority of them who desire that this change should be made. That it is a great change cannot be denied. By the Constitution of this country, from the beginning of the time when the Judges went circuit, it has always been the rule that the Judges have been bound to deliver the gaol, and that every prisoner awaiting trial should be tried at the Assize. The only persons who can be benefited by this Bill are those leading members of the circuits who have to wait when there is only one Judge taking cases until they can get their civil business brought on, and I cannot help suspecting that this Bill which has been brought into the other House has been brought in for the benefit of those gentlemen and of nobody else. Now, with regard to the prisoners, this Bill would break the rule which has always existed, because it would keep prisoners longer in prison than, according to the present system, they are. You will be taking away the opportunity which prisoners who are in gaol have of being tried. It is the constitutional practice that the Judge of Assize shall deliver the gaol, and that every prisoner awaiting trial shall be tried at the Assize. But this Bill would deprive the prisoners of this right. If this Bill passes, then, if the prisoner is committed for trial immediately after one Quarter Sessions, he will be kept in prison and will have to wait until the next Quarter Sessions, though in the interval there might be an Assize held. The rule of delivering the gaols which exists at the present moment, therefore, will be broken. This Bill would also deprive the prisoner of the right of being tried before a Judge of the High Court. It is said that Judges ought not to waste their knowledge and skill in trying such cases. I absolutely and entirely repudiate such a principle. There is nothing derogatory to a Judge in having to try cases which, though of no intrinsic gravity, are of extreme importance to the prisoners, and as a matter of fact Judges do not complain of having to do so. It is of the greatest importance to a prisoner who is being tried, perhaps for the first time, however slight the evidence against him may be, to have all a Judge's skill and powers of mind to determine whether they are, or not, to be branded with a conviction. It is of especial importance in such cases where prisoners tried for the first time may have a stigma cast upon them. The only people I believe who would be benefited by the Bill are the members of the circuit, not the prisoners, and that I say is a thing which ought not to be.

*VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: My Lords, I cannot agree with the noble and learned Lord in his objections to the Bill nor in his argument of the great advantage to prisoners of being tried before Judges, some of whom on their appointment have never held a criminal brief and know much less of the Criminal Law than many Chairmen of Quarter Sessions and Recorders. Judges have plenty of other important work to do, and are not intended to devote their time to lighter work of this character which can be excellently done by others. Now, my Lords, with regard to small offences being tried at the Assizes. It is quite obvious that the Judges have

work of a higher character to do, and that they are appointed for that purpose. Why, then, are cases taken away from Recorders and others who are perfectly competent to deal with them on the spot because a Judge happens to come to the Assize town at a particular time? Trial before the Judge in such cases is a mere accident; and this Bill would relieve the country of expense and the Judges from a great amount of business which is thrust unnecessarily upon them. According to my noble and learned Friend, wrong is done to the prisoners by depriving them of the opportunity of being tried before Judges. But they have not always that opportunity. There are always four Sessions in the year for trying prisoners, and generally more than that; I think in West Yorkshire there are eight. Recorders, at least, are well-qualified and regularly trained to the business; and Chairmen of Quarter Sessions have generally both knowledge and experience. Why should not they try cases which they are perfectly competent to try on the spot at much less expense, and do try when the Judges do not happen to hold Assizes before them? Witnesses under such a plan as now exists have to be transferred at great expense from the district where the offence is committed to the Assize town, from a prison and a tribunal on the spot competent to try them, and at less expense than they could be tried before a Judge. It is in no sense a question of principle, and it is not, I submit to your Lordships, for the sake of the prisoners, but for the sake of the public that the practice should be altered, and that the time of the Judges should not be occupied in trying little trumpery cases at Assizes when their presence is required in London or elsewhere. At present you are cutting blocks with razors. Many of the cases which have to be tried by the Judges would be as well tried by a couple of magistrates at Petty Sessions. They are, indeed, generally the same classes of cases which magistrates at Petty Sessions deal with themselves—they do not send them to a jury. I have not had the opportunity of looking at the terms of the Returns to which my noble Friend on the Woolsack referred; but I think there is one instance given where the Judge of Assize was occupied for five days in that way. I think our Judges might be much better employed than in trying cases which Chairman of Quarter Sessions and Recorders are constantly in the habit of trying with satisfaction.

*The Earl of SELBORNE: My Lords, I agree with those who think that upon the merits of this Bill it ought to pass. But I also agree with what my noble Friend the Lord Chief Justice has said as to another matter which, though it seems to me not to be germane to this Bill, it is well should be called to the attention of the Legislature, and that is the question of doing something to reduce the severity of sentences. It is obvious that if anything can be done in that respect it should be done in reference not only to prisoners who, but for this Bill, would be tried at the Assizes, but generally with regard to all who come within the law. My Lords, I should be glad to see that matter well looked to. Certainly I can say that when I was in office I was very much struck with many instances of disproportionate severity at Quarter Sessions in the sentences passed. I think the whole subject requires attention, and, perhaps, not as to sentences passed at Quarter Sessions only; but this does not seem to me to be a proper occasion on which to deal with it.

Lord HERSCHELL: My Lords, I only wish to add that I have no desire to advocate the Bill for the purpose of relieving the Judges of work. It does not matter much to them what work they are doing. They can only occupy a certain amount of time, and whether they are deciding simple cases or difficult cases is to them a matter of small concern. It is no relief to them to say that they should not try easy cases but only difficult ones which involve more trouble. I do not think that is a matter which is at all before your Lordships. In bringing this Bill before you I do so on two grounds—one is the ground of the saving of expense, the other is a ground distinctly referring to the prisoners and their interests. The principle I advocate in this Bill is that the more you can try these small cases on the spot the better it is for the man himself. I would not have advocated it otherwise. A prisoner very often wants to call witnesses to character, and it may often affect the sentence if he does call them with regard to the commission of an offence, and it ought to affect the

sentence. Now, if a prisoner is tried at Quarter Sessions, he has his witnesses on the spot; but he has not always the means of bringing them to the Assize town, and as they cannot be called he suffers hardship in consequence. I think therefore on the whole, it is distinctly to the interest of the prisoner that he should be tried on the spot, and that the Bill should pass.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND: My Lords, there is only one matter to which I wish to refer, and that is the expression of the noble and learned Lord who has charge of the Bill, that what he looks to is the interests of prisoners in this matter; and he has argued that it would be in the interests of prisoners that they should be tried at the Quarter Sessions town.

LORD HERSCHELL: No, I did not say that; I said I would not have advocated it if I did not believe that, on the whole, it would be to the advantage of the prisoners in these small cases if they could be tried on the spot.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND: The noble and learned Lord argued that it would be in the interests of prisoners that they should be tried at the Quarter Sessions town. The noble and learned Lord, I am afraid, has never paid a visit to Sussex. The Quarter Sessions town of the Eastern Division of that county is Lewes, and cases some from all parts of the division to be tried there. In the Western Division of Sussex Quarter Sessions are held at Horsham and Chichester. If an offence is committed on the borders of Sussex and Surrey, the case would have to be tried at Chichester, and the noble Lord's argument about the facility with which a prisoner would be able to bring his witnesses to character to a Quarter Sessions town falls to the ground, certainly in that instance, because there is a considerable distance between the borders of Surrey and Sussex and Chichester. Then, with regard to the time a prisoner would have to remain in prison. A man might be committed for trial immediately after the Easter Sessions, and if the magistrates could not commit him to the Assizes and he could not obtain bail, he would remain in prison from the month of March to the month of July. That would not be in the interest of the prisoner. I think, therefore, the argument of the noble and learned Lord is not sustainable.

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL (No. 52).

Read a third time (according to order), and passed and sent to the Commons.

DEFENCE OF THE HARBOUR OF ESQUIMAULT.

QUESTIONS—OBSERVATIONS.

*LORD SUDELEY: My Lords, I rise to ask the question of which I have given notice, and that is to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Dominion Government of Canada have assented to the proposed arrangement for the defence of the harbour of Esquimault, in Vancouver's Island, which he stated last year had been sent out on the 12th of June, 1888; whether the contemplated works had been commenced and the armament sent out; whether the Government would now state the date when the fortifications of this important harbour (being the headquarters of our Navy on the Pacific Station) would be completed and the guns placed in position. I desire to call attention to the present position of this matter, the peculiar and unsatisfactory position of the naval headquarters at Esquimault, in Vancouver's Island, and their present undefended state. Your Lordships will remember that about a year ago I went very fully into this question, and endeavoured not only to show that the port of Esquimault was utterly undefended, but also that the naval headquarters ought to be transferred to Burrard's inlet, the terminus of the Pacific Railway. During that discussion the Government endeavoured to show that it was impossibte to make the proposed alterations, and that it had finally been decided that the naval headquarters were to remain at Esquimault. That being the decision arrived at, I will not again attempt to prove that the headquarters ought to have been removed, although I am confident I am right. Whether the decision of the Government was right or not, all authorities—Canadian, English, and officers of the Army and Navy are agreed that Esquimault is a place of very great importance,

and that if it is to be our naval headquarters and our only coaling station on the Pacific Station, there can be no doubt that it ought to be put into a position of being able to defend itself. Last year I stated that at that time there were no guns or any fortifications which could withstand a hostile attack, and that the place was absolutely undefended. I pointed out that the two torpedo boats which were at that port were old and obsolete, and could not, therefore, be made available. The noble Lord who represented the Admiralty did not attempt to controvert this. He practically acknowledged that at the time the place was undefended. It was stated that Esquimault was to be the permanent headquarters, and that the Government fully concurred that it ought to be defended, that a large number of guns were ready to be sent out, and that the only reason the matter was not at once concluded was that there was some slight difference of opinion between the Colonial Government and the Imperial Government upon some details on the question of defence. My noble and gallant Friend who represents the Admiralty stated that "the plans for the defence of Esquimault are all completed. They are cut and dried, so to speak. Men and guns are ready to be sent out to-morrow." He said that it was intended to place the harbour in a good condition of defence, and that the only difficulty which arose was that it was necessary for certain arrangements to be carried out. The noble Lord who represented the War Office on his part went further into details, and after acknowledging that the place ought to be at once armed, explained that there had been some slight alteration in the proposed armament, but that it was now decided to have two 6-in. guns, four 9-in., two quick-firing, six 16-pounders, and six rifled machine guns; that they were prepared to spend £31,000 upon armament, £10,000 upon submarine stores, and about £10,000 upon submarine mines and torpedos, and that the guns were nearly all ready to send out with a supply of ammunition. In July last I asked what had actually been done, and I was told by the Secretary of State for the Colonies that a letter had been sent out to the Dominion Government of Canada on the 12th of June last year asking for their assent to certain arrangements, and that immediately a reply was received the work should be carried out. Twelve months have passed since that time, and if I am rightly informed nothing whatever has been done. The promises made have not been carried out; no guns have been sent, and no definite arrangements have been completed. Who is actually to blame I cannot tell. I have heard from many quarters that there has been a "Midshipman Easy" kind of triangular duel of correspondence going on. The Admiralty has written to the War Office, the War Office has written to the Admiralty, and both Departments have written to the Colonial Office. The Colonial Office has written to the Dominion of Canada, and they have all written again to each other, and the grand result has been absolutely *nil*. Early this Session I put this notice on the Paper, and I was asked to postpone it because the Government had reason to believe the matter would be at once settled. Now that three months have elapsed I hope that my noble and gallant Friend who will reply to the question will be able to say that I am mistaken, and that really something has been done. But I cannot help thinking from all I have heard that from want of determination on the part of those in high authority we are actually in a worse position than we were 12 months ago, and I should not be surprised to find that a new set of correspondence has been set on foot in lieu of that of last year, and that the guns have been distributed to other places and used elsewhere. At the end of last Session I ventured to ask my noble Friend the Secretary for State for the Colonies what had then been done, and he then stated that a letter embodying the views of the Government had been sent to the Government of the Dominion of Canada and they were only waiting for the result. Of course, my Lords, under ordinary circumstances this would be merely ludicrous, but the real danger of leaving that naval station undefended is so grave that I ventured to call your Lordships' serious attention to it, as in case of war with Russia our position in the Pacific Ocean, with its greatest commercial interests, would certainly be compromized. Let us for a moment see what this harbour being undefended

means. Esquimault, in the whole of the Pacific Ocean, is the only place where ships can go for coal, shelter, or repair. Of its strategic importance, having regard to the great development of Western Canada and the recently constructed Canadian Pacific Railway, it would be impossible to say too much. Russia has a great naval arsenal at Vladivostock, only a few days' steam away, which is often described as one of the first in the world. In urging the importance of this matter, I should like to say that in considering the possibilities of war, I allude specially to what would happen if war with Russia were to break out. Any question of war with the United States is one which I do not think ought to enter into our minds. Such a war would be fracticidal and, to my mind, impossible, and not within the scope of practical politics. With Russia, however, it is different. It must not be forgotten that a few years ago a Russian squadron was concentrated at San Francisco at a time when a war with this country was imminent, and it was well known that one object was to capture the harbour of Esquimault and the coaling station of Nanaimo. I think that of itself is sufficient to show the enormous importance of the question, and that I need not offer any apology for bringing it forward again. I hope the noble Lord will be able to give me some satisfactory statement, and that he will tell me whether I am right in saying that the guns which were prepared for this place last year are no longer ready to be sent there, but have been distributed to other coaling stations, and that nothing whatever has been done.

*Lord ELPHINSTONE: My Lords, I am obliged to the noble Lord for postponing his question, which one must acknowledge has been for some time on the Notice Paper. I must, first, quite admit the great importance of the question. I went fully into the matter last year, and I will not weary your Lordships by going over it again. In the dispatch of 13th of June, it was stipulated, among other things, that while the Imperial Government were prepared to find armament, ammunition, and submarine stores, the Dominion Government, on their part, were to provide the permanent garrison, and trained instructors capable of instructing the artillery and submarine miners, who would form part of the local force. On further consideration it appeared that the Dominion Government would probably find very great difficulty, and certainly very great expense would be thrown upon them were they to be called upon to provide the artillerymen, submarine miners, and officers capable of instructing the local force, and it has therefore been decided that a force of 75 Royal Marine Artillery are to be offered to the Dominion Government, including three officers. Fifty of those men will act as artillerymen, and 15 as submarine miners. The charge for maintaining that force—£7,000 a year—will be borne by the Dominion Government. The whole force will be under the command of a field officer, who will take command of the whole garrison. The officers will be capable of training the men of the local force in artillery and submarine drill. A Despatch to that effect was sent out on May 2 last. The Admiralty have already selected the officers and men for that purpose, and they can, if required, be sent away at two or three days' notice with the exception of the submarine miners. The reason of that exception is that the military and naval submarine drill are different, and it is thought desirable to have the men trained in the military drill as otherwise there would be two different systems and sets of stores in the colony, which would be sure to lead to confusion. Application as to the training of those men has been made to the War Office. With regard to the second part of the question, which asks whether the works have been commenced and when they will be completed, that is a question rather for the War Office than the Admiralty, but I apprehend that they are both very much in the same position, that is to say, that neither can take any step forward until the Canadian Government have replied to the Despatch of May 2. With regard to the guns, my noble Friend (Lord Harris) is unable to be present, and has authorized me to say that part of the armament that was to have gone to Esquimault has been sent to the coaling stations at Jamaica and St. Lucia, and for sea service. The quick-firing guns are in the manufacturers' hands, and the machine guns are being re-bored. There is no doubt that the armament

will be ready as soon as the fortifications are fit to receive them. The Government do not feel justified in keeping guns in England awaiting the completion of fortifications which are only in contemplation, while there are other important fortifications and ships ready to receive guns.

*Lord SUDELEY: My Lords, I beg to give notice that I will put this question again when sufficient time has elapsed to enable the Dominion Government to reply to the Despatch of May 2nd, and I also give notice that I shall inquire as to the progress that has been made with the defences of King George's Sound and Thursday Island, which, I understand, are at present in a very backward state.

WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE—LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

The Earl of ROSEBERY, in rising to move an Address for a Return showing the number of women in England and Wales who are qualified to vote for County Councils and for Councillors in municipal boroughs, indicating in each case what is the qualification which entitles a woman to be placed on the register, said: I have been informed by the noble Lord, through whose Department these Returns would come, that there will be great difficulty in furnishing them in the form which I desire, but that they will be given in different for England, Scotland, and Ireland. Even in that form they will, I think, give more information than is at present available.

*Earl BROWNLOW: With regard to the Return of women voters, it would entail great trouble and expense to give those relating to voters for Boards of Guardians and School Boards, and so much delay would be caused that the Returns would probably be useless. As however, the noble Lord is satisfied with the Returns in the form in which they have been offered, I will undertake to have them laid on the Table. The Return will consist of the number of women entitled to vote for County Councils and Municipal Councils.

The Marquess of LOTHIAN: I shall be willing to give the Returns relating to Scotland.

Earl CADOGAN: I dare say my noble Friend is aware that women are not allowed to vote in municipal elections in Ireland except in one case—Belfast. I am afraid it will entail a very large amount of labour upon the clerks of Unions. If they are granted for England and Scotland, they should also be granted for Ireland.

The Earl of ROSEBERY: Then I will withdraw the Motion.

THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SYSTEM.

The Bishop of LICHFIELD, in rising to call attention to the evils arising from the early age at which children may leave the public elementary schools under the present system, and to move for Returns, said: My Lords, this is a subject of very great importance. It is not a question of cubic feet or the distribution of grants; it is a question of the ultimate results of our whole system of education. A very large number of the children now leave school at a very early age, and a part of this evil arises from the liberty given to the Local Authorities to fix for themselves the standard at which children may leave school. In some cases, a child may leave school at the age of ten years, having passed the necessary standard required by the Local Authority. At that age a child is not competent to enter upon the labour to which his life can be devoted, and the consequence is, he runs about the streets and easily gets into the ranks of the criminal classes. I venture to think that this letting children leave at so early an age is very prejudicial to the education and the moral effect of the instruction they receive. If you examine boys who have left school for four, five, or six years, who have passed the standard required by the Act, you will find that in many such cases they have absolutely lost the power of reading with intelligence. I know that is the case in many parts of my own diocese. If that is so it points to there being something radically wrong and deficient in the system of education for the purpose of fitting the children for the duties they will have to fulfil in after life. I am not now entering on the question whether it is very important or not that the children of agricultural labourers should be well instructed on all those matters now comprised in our Education Code, but I do say, after devoting all the time and cost that is devoted to the education of

a child, it is a miserable result if you find that after five or six years he has actually forgotten how to read with intelligence. A child's mind is singularly receptive up to a certain age, and it becomes retentive just about the time it is turned away from the school, and at the time when your Lordships are sending your own boys to public schools. The present system of payment by results eminently tends to what is called cramming. There is another reason why you should not let the children leave school at so early an age. We are all aware that between 12 and 15 a boy's moral character begins to be formed, and it is at this critical time that we lose our hold of him altogether. Now, I do not propose that the children should be necessarily detained for a longer period in the elementary schools, although 10 years is hardly a sufficient age for an child to leave off attending school. The evil might be met in another way—first, by the wise extension of half-time. In agricultural districts this might be done by means of winter schools, as is done in other countries, especially in Switzerland where "half-timers" are not interfered with in the summer when they are able to work, but in the dark winter days when people are not employed in agricultural labour, they are sent to the schools. Although I am not in favour of compulsion at any time, I think, if it is employed, it can be far more usefully done at an earlier than at a later age. Children are very often sent to school by their parents for the purpose of getting rid of them; then, when they are just old enough to know how to fall into mischief, we lose our hold of them altogether, and I believe that has disastrous results. An extension of half-time might no doubt meet this evil to some extent. Far more use might be made of Saturdays than at present. I know of cases where children are ready to be gathered in voluntarily into the schools on Saturday afternoons, but, instead of being taught there, they are left running about the cold, damp streets. But there is another way, and that a most important way, of correcting the evil—evening schools. I do not think, until the introduction of the Code, anything material had been done to encourage this useful kind of education. By evening schools in manufacturing towns and winter schools in agricultural districts a great deal can be done to supplement education and to keep the children under moral control, and counteract the mischief which is being done at an important and critical period of their lives. In Germany these evening schools are an integral part of the system of education, and the children are required to attend them. In reference to this point, the Commissioners say that they fully agree that the retention of some controlling influence over the scholars after they leave the day schools, and their removal from the contamination of the streets, would have a most excellent moral effect during a most dangerous period of life, and would be an object worth some public expenditure to attain. But there is scarcely anything in the Code which helps forward the end which the Commissioners have in view. Then they say there is always a necessity for having some kind of evening school for the purpose of fixing what has been learnt in the day school, and it would be worth while to spend something with that object. Further, they say that a special curriculum and standard should be provided suitable to the requirements of each locality, and that no special limit of age should be imposed upon the scholars. That last recommendation is of great importance. They further add that the evening schools of the future should be regarded and organized as schools for the retention of education already received in the day schools, and that for some years to come it will be necessary to have in evening schools the course of instruction given in the day schools. Now, my Lords, as I have said, I have no wish to increase the limit of age at which the children are required to leave school, or to raise the standard which they are required to pass before leaving school. In some instances even, I think it might be well if the children were allowed to continue their education in the evening schools, but what I wish to ask the noble Lord is whether some practical effect could not be given to the recommendations of the Commissioners by encouraging the evening schools, and, further, whether something could not be done to restrain the almost unlimited power of Local Authorities to fix the standard at which a child might leave

school. I am satisfied that where a child leaves school permanently at ten ye ars of age, great mischief is done, from my experience in manufacturing and large towns, where one is pestered by little boys running about the railway stations and public places, offering newspapers, lights, and so on. With reference to the powers given to Local Authorities in the matter of fixing the standard, I would ask whether a Return similar to the one that was made in 1881, giving the standards fixed by the different School Boards and other Local Authorities, could not be obtained up to the present time. Such a Return would throw light upon the subject I have brought before your Lordships, which is one of the greatest importance, and by far the most important matter we have at present to consider. I think we are all living under a great delusion with regard to the ultimate effects of this system of education in which we are spending so much money. I do not suppose any sudden change will be made in this matter; we must move slowly, and ultimately this system will act upon the least steady and least educated of the children of the poor. Still, I venture to express the hope that something may yet be introduced with the view of dealing with these difficulties, which, I believe, are productive of very serious evils, which I have only very imperfectly indicated in the statement I have made to your Lordships, and which are so much to be deplored.

*LORD NORTON: My Lords, I think that the danger is not in the children leaving too soon, but rather in their leaving school before work is ready for them. If there were no interval between their leaving school and their going to work, the age of 13 would not be a bit too early for a boy to leave school. What is generally lost sight of is that for the working classes work is one of the most important parts of education. Leaving school is not ceasing from education. The most important part of a boy's education comes after he leaves school. He gains in intelligence, in knowledge, and in discipline. Therefore, to say that the children of the working classes leave school too soon seems to me a mistake. The danger, it seems to me, is that they leave school before they are ready to go to work, that there is an interval of idleness in which they lose all they have learned at school, and are not keeping up their education by work. If there were no such interval, I say they would not leave school too soon; on the contrary, I would advocate, in some cases, that they should leave school sooner. The half time system is a very good one. It divides the book-work with the other work. There are two kinds of education—namely, the education of the school and the education of apprenticeship. I am convinced that you would find in the national schools that the half time boys, if tried against the full time boys in anything that requires intelligence, would beat the full time boys. The acknowledged fault of our national schools is that they are too literary; they have too much unrelieved book work; and what is wanted is something of the nature of industry or, as was suggested by a noble Lord the other day, bodily exercise. It is not fit that children of that class should be kept exclusively to book work. There are schools too much the other way being introduced into the large towns called technical schools. They are really national workshops—*ateliers nationaux*. It would be far better to put the boys in a regular shop or business at once; and in most of the great manufacturing towns they could get education in connection with real work and not sham work. I quite agree that there is very great danger in the interval of idleness between their leaving school under the existing law at the age of 13 and going to work, an interval when they were neither at school nor at work. All classes should remain at school till their life-work begins. It is proposed that there should be more evening schools or continuation schools. I think the continuation schools would be much better called *de novo* schools, because the scholars have, in a great measure, to begin again at A B C, according to the evidence given before the Commission. This comes of our piece-work payment leading to mere cram. The principle we should aim at is that the children should leave school as soon as the head of the school says they are fit, and work could be found for them. As to evening classes, I have not much hope or expectation in regard to them. The plan has

been tried for many years and it has failed, and the reason is very obvious. Would any of your Lordships like, after a day's hard work, to set about a course of study? To expect those children who are tired out by their work during the day to take to hard intellectual labour at night is absurd. Let rational amusement be provided for them in the evening, but it is useless to expect them then to study.

*Earl FORTESCUE: My Lords, with regard to long compulsory retention in schools, it seems to me that it is injurious to the children themselves, to their parents, and to their schoolfellows, and a hardship upon their teachers. There is a class of boys and girls at the schools who are of an age beyond that of most of their schoolfellows, and who, because they do not pass a certain standard, are kept in compulsory bodily idleness and not allowed to earn their living. They are a burden to their parents or to the ratepayers, as the case may be; they are discontented and generally less amenable to discipline than the other scholars; and thus they form a most unwholesome element in a school. Some Boards of Guardians have recommended that after the age of 12 the school instruction of the children under their charge should not interfere with the training of their hands, which is best acquired at an early age. The right reverend Prelate seems to overestimate enormously the moral and religious influence of keeping children long at school; for work itself is a most wholesome part of education, and though I have always believed our school hours to be too long, they occupy after all but a small portion of the day. The alleged relapse of scholars into ignorance is largely due to the repulsive form in which instruction has been given under the old Code, to the time spent on parsing, spelling, and rules of grammar, instead of in the perusal of instructive and interesting works, from which grammar and spelling are unconsciously learnt with little labour. I have received many excellent letters from working men, badly spelt and faulty in grammar, but full of good sense and useful information; and on the other hand, in former days great statesmen and commanders were most incorrect in their spelling; indeed, I lately read a letter, written about a century and a half ago by an ancestor of Her Most Gracious Majesty, very indifferent in grammar and full of mistakes in spelling. The blending into one chaotic confusion of primary and secondary education is the greatest mistake, and the proper remedy for this is to be found in scholarships from elementary to more advanced schools. I will end by heartily supporting the right reverend Prelate's appeal for rather more encouragement to evening schools from Government, especially during the winter, when the shorter hours of daylight imply shorter hours of work.

The Earl of MEATH: It is most satisfactory to learn from the right rev. Prelate that he does not wish to increase the hours during the day at which children should attend the elementary schools. I think that that would entail great hardship upon the parents of children of the working classes, and I think also that it would be met with great opposition from the farmers in the agricultural districts as well as from employers in the towns. This debate shows, I think, that there is a very strong feeling in favour of half-timers, and also in favour of evening schools. Although the noble Lord said he thought the evening schools a failure, he attributed that failure to the lack of recreation. The classes of the Evening Recreative Schools Association, which has done such excellent work, under the auspices of one of the Royal Princes, are attended in very large numbers. If you invite children to evening schools where practical work is mixed with a little physical recreation, they come in large numbers very readily. I believe the whole reason of the unsatisfactory nature of much of the present education—for I must say that it is unsatisfactory—is that it is too literary and not practical enough. My Lord stated that the children of the working classes should be taught to work. I say that the children of all classes should be taught to work. I should like to see the child of the Duke as well as the child of the working man taught to do something with his hand. That is very useful for boys, but it is even more useful for girls. Our girls are turned out from school without being able to make the homes of their future husbands happy and comfortable. The

home is the nursery of the virtues, and the principles upon which civilization and social order are formed have to be taught in those homes; and, if the woman who has to keep the home is unable to make it an attractive and comfortable home for her husband, how can it be expected that the principles of social order can be taught in such a home? In America about 11 years ago a niece of the Bishop of Huntingdon was very much struck by the utter neglect of all housewifery duties in the homes of the artizans of New York, and she could not understand how it was that artizans who received such high wages should live in such a miserable condition, and she came to the conclusion that it was because their wives had never seen what a comfortable home was; they had no knowledge of how to make a home comfortable; it did not come to them intuitively as it does to our daughters of the middle class, and even of the working class. She had the happy thought of starting classes for the purpose of teaching housewifery. Those schools have been a great success, and many of the girls have gone out of them and married, and there is a marked difference between the homes presided over by women educated in her schools and those in which the wife has come from the ordinary schools. Girls, I am sure your Lordships will agree with me, ought to be taught at an early age that dirt is a disgrace and that disgrace is a sin. I hope this House may be able to do something towards making the daughters of the working classes more able to make homes happy. The Colonies are crying out for men who can handle a plough and shoe a horse; instead of those, we send them clerks and would-be gentlemen. They are asking for wives who are able to mend and wash, and who understand something about a dairy, and about the management of poultry; instead, we give them young women who are fitted to be governesses, and who are utterly incapable of doing anything which is required of them when they become wives. In view of the depression of trade and agriculture, it is necessary that all classes should do the utmost to promote economy and thrift. It is imperative that our boys should be taught handicrafts and that our girls should be taught housewifery

LORD ELGIN: I think that the system of evening schools is capable of much wider extension, and that there are particular reasons why it should be extended to Scotland; and I would venture to trespass very shortly on your attention with some remarks in reference to the effect of the early withdrawal of the children of our schools. We have in Scotland, as your Lordships are aware, a uniform Board School system, and anyone who has taken a practical interest in the working of that system must have been very much struck by the gap which invariably occurs after the Fifth Standard. I have myself frequently seen a large and flourishing class in the Fifth Standard in one year, and the next year it has dwindled down to a miserable half-dozen. Although the working of this costly system ought to have introduced, and probably has, much larger numbers into our schools, and therefore ought to have increased all the classes, we do not, I think, find that anything like the proper proportion of increase in the higher standards is maintained. It is interesting to ask what the cause of this may be, and I do not think that in the discussion which has taken place, one of the causes, at any rate, has been alluded to. It has often been said that the fees are to blame in this respect, and that if education were free this would disappear. That is a proposition which I am hardly disposed either absolutely to deny or assert, but the matter is one that is of particular interest to us in Scotland at this moment, because we are great sufferers in this direction. I, of course, do not wish to raise any question which is not directly before the House, but I should venture to express the hope that the report which has been published that the whole of the grant which is to be made in aid of fees is to be spent in the lower standards is not correct. It has been argued that the parents will spend the savings which they will make from the free education of the younger children on the education of the elder. I venture to doubt whether there will be any such result. At any rate, we should bear this in mind, that we should certainly lose those whom it would be our best interest to secure—namely, the clever children of intelligent parents. I think the view of very many of the parents is that they will pay just as

much as they are obliged to pay, and no more. For myself, I confess that I should like to begin at the other end, and if remission of fees is to be made it should begin, at any rate in a large proportion, in the higher standards. I may mention in this connection that I know from experience that certain Boards at present, either wholly or partially, remit fees in the Sixth Standards with good results. Again, some Boards give remission of fees according to the number of children of one family, sometimes letting the fourth child in free, at any rate letting off the eldest of the family. I do not pretend that these views will meet with acceptance everywhere, but I would like to press upon my noble Friend the Secretary for Scotland to take them into consideration. But, my Lords, with regard to this particular question of early age, I do not think that parents, in the views they take, are altogether correct, although it appears to me that the regulations of the Code, and especially the regulation as to the granting of certificates on passing the Fifth Standard, are such as to encourage these ideas. It may very fairly get about among the less well-informed classes that if the Government allows a child to leave school at any age on passing a certain examination, that child has reached a point in his education where it may reasonably be held to be complete. Apart altogether from whether the examination in the Fifth Standard is a satisfactory test, and apart also from the questions which have been raised by the noble Lord who spoke last and by the noble Lord opposite as to the particular instruction which ought to be given in the schools—whether it ought to be more in the nature of material instruction and less of literary instruction—I would venture to say that the opinion which has been expressed by the right reverend Prelate that a child of ten or eleven cannot be expected to retain a permanent impression of any education which it receives at that age, is one that anybody who looks into the matter will be forced to admit. I might mention, perhaps, an illustration which has come under my own personal knowledge—a case in which a certain number of boys and young men who had passed out of the school age requested a School Board to establish an evening class for their benefit. The School Board naturally expected that they would receive a sum for the higher instruction of those pupils, but on the class being opened it was found that almost all of these young men wished elementary instruction, some even going back as far as the Second Standard. Now, all these evils are increased by the children leaving the school at the early age at which they are now enabled to leave by these labour certificates. We lose the very best of our scholars, because those who pass at that early age are those who either by natural ability or greater industry, or better teaching, have been brought up to the mark. This, again, is specially important to us in Scotland. It has always been the boast of Scotland that there is no halting place between the elementary schools and the Universities. I do not argue that that is the best system; I am inclined to think that it is not; but on the other hand, I do say that anything which either directly or indirectly tends to lower the standard in the elementary schools is a great mistake. As regards the remedy which should be applied in these circumstances, it is more difficult to speak, but the right rev. Prelate and other noble Lords have spoken of evening schools. Well, all I would say on that matter is this: that in the first place, it appears to me to be a remedy which will not be applicable to any great extent in rural districts, where there are small schools at a great distance, and it is impossible to maintain evening schools; and in the second place, and more generally, it is surely not a satisfactory state of things that we should have a system of education so incomplete that we have to set up another system of education in order to begin again the education which has been forgotten after once being acquired. My Lords, there is one matter which I think might be carried out with advantage. We have already laid down certain fixed limits of age. At the age of 5 we compel children to go to school, and after the age of 13 or 14 we allow them to leave school. I do not see why it should not be laid down that the labour certificates, on passing the Fifth Standard, should not be granted at an age when the children are confessedly immature—that they should be kept at school say till the age of 12, at any rate, before

being allowed to go out to work. After all, a child between 10 and 12 is not capable of work, to any great extent, of a nature which should stand in the way of education. I think this would at any rate be better than the other remedy which has been proposed, which is to raise the standard and require, perhaps, the Sixth Standard before granting a certificate; because that would only shift the difficulty, and probably lead to greater cram. The noble Lord the Vice President spoke the other night of the vast expenditure which is made on education in this country. I think there is one thing which is intolerable about that vast expenditure, and that is that we should not get value for our money. It is because I think leaving school at an early age leads to expense in that direction that I am very glad the subject has been brought up.

*VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: The noble Lord who has last spoken has directed your Lordships' attention to Scotland. That is, no doubt, something outside the subject which the right rev. Prelate sought to bring forward. At the same time, I am not at all disposed to quarrel with the noble Lord for having called the attention of the House to the various matters to which he alluded. They are very important subjects, and I will only say that a great many of them have been very carefully thought over and considered. With regard to the age of leaving school, I think we should hesitate in laying down any hard and fast rule. The right rev. Prelate seemed to object to the Local Authorities laying down the standard at which children should be exempt. That was done in view of each locality adapting itself to its particular requirements. It is all very well for us here to talk calmly of this question of the early age at which children leave school, but there are many, many families in this country to whom the 2s. 6d. or 3s. a week which a young child may earn is of the greatest assistance, and to say that a boy is not to be allowed to earn that on account of his age is confounding two things—it is counting mere instruction as of more importance than education. I cannot help thinking that the moral effect upon a boy or a girl who can do something to lighten the hard trials to which their families are put, to bring small earnings to help to meet the growing appetites, is more valuable than the three R's or any other form of elementary education. I am very far from saying that the child would not be better for staying longer at school, but if he can assist his family it seems to me that after attaining the standard which is fixed, his first duty is at home. There are many households which could not get on at all without the assistance of girls of about 10 or 11 years of age. Those who fancy that girls so young are useless should go into the streets here or elsewhere in town or country, and see children of that age taking care of infants while the parents are working and the house is shut up. In the parks of London there are plenty of such cases to be seen. My right rev. Friend asked me in respect to this question whether the standard at which labour certificates are granted cannot be raised. That is rather a matter of legislation; it cannot be done by the Code. With regard to the question of half time I am not aware that there is any difficulty thrown in the way of half time education, but it is rarely in force except in very populous districts. In those populous districts, as Huddersfield or Bradford, for instance—you will find there is an enormous number of children who are educated at half time schools, and probably there there are discrepancies; one town may fix a standard one degree higher than another. Still, you can hardly say that Bradford is not competent to fix its own time for the children to be allowed to leave school. You must remember, my Lords, that this whole system of compulsion was altogether novel in this country. We are complaining that there is still a great deal that is undone, but surely no one can look around him without noticing the enormous difference in the education and in the character of the children to what it was in former days. I do not mean to confine myself to 1870, for volunteers had done a great work previously. There is no doubt truth in what has been said about the children forgetting a great deal of what they learn in the schools. But I would like to ask those who have been educated in our large public schools whether they have not forgotten a great deal more than they have retained of the

education they there received. I would like to ask some of those young gentlemen who have studied in our public schools—not leaving them when they were 10 or 11, but going there at the age of 13, after a previous elementary education, and remaining there till they were 18—how much of what they learnt in those five years they have not forgotten by the time they are 30? I have met very remarkable instances of boys who were supposed to be well up in Greek when they were at school, but who ten or a dozen years afterwards know no more of Greek than they do of Hebrew. The fact is, there is a great deal of the education of both the upper and the poorer classes which simply passes away like vapour. I have endeavoured so far as I could to get rid of the system of payment by individual results, in order that there may be a more generous and generally fairer system of education without the cram, which does not give permanent results. Now, with regard to evening schools, the objection made by the noble Lord opposite seems to me a crucial one, applying to the whole system in one sense—that is to say, you cannot lay down general rules for town and country. We have given by the new Code greater facilities than there have been before for treating those subjects which are taught in evening classes. There is one point that has been pressed upon me to which I should like to refer—namely, that evening schools should be extended to adults over 21. Well, I have no objection to adults coming to evening schools, but it is a serious question whether the country should pay for them. My noble Friend behind me said, "Do not let a child go until he has work ready for him." That is a rule that would not work for a moment. In my own neighbourhood children of 10 years of age can, in certain parts of the year, get abundance of work. I have known cases where the children of a single family, going out and gathering acorns to be sold to farmers for their sheep and so forth, have in one year earned £3 to £5 for their parents. I need not say what is earned by children during the hop-picking season, when children of very immature age, much younger than 10, take an active part with their parents. Some years ago I asked a farmer what he paid to one of his labourers for hop-picking—which lasts about six weeks; he said he paid to a man and his wife, who brought with them their two young children, £25 in six weeks. That, no doubt, is exceptional, but shows the importance of child labour at times. All these things show that you must not be too rigid in laying down hard and fast rules according to which children are to be allowed to leave school. If they have reached a certain standard and their labour is valuable, and their parents wish for it, their parents have submitted to compulsion on the understanding that the time is to come when they are to have the power of availing themselves of their children's services—and the children themselves know that there is a certain time, and no doubt look forward to it—it is harsh and cruel to enforce their further attendance. When you speak of agricultural instruction in schools, the very fact that these children are leaving at that early time shows how impossible almost it would be to have an agricultural education with any effect in the schools themselves. They get it fast enough when they go to work; they become familiar with horses and cattle, and they learn a great deal by a steady, slow process, which sticks to them for the rest of their lives. As for the interval immediately after leaving school, there are societies, like the Boys' and Girls' Friendly Society, which doing valuable work in keeping up correspondence with these young people when they leave school, and agencies of this kind multiply. And, my Lords, you may depend upon it that as the system of education goes on you will find that the necessity of it will impress itself upon the parents who have themselves had it, and that the extension of education will come rather by inducements than by force. I do hope that, because it is seen that this system of leaving school at an early age has its disadvantages as well as its advantages, you will not be too active to interfere with it by laying down some iron limit which may bring an opposition to compulsory education, which hitherto there has not been. Do not let it be supposed that we are worse off than we were before. The right rev. Prelate referred to the Report. The Commissioners in the main all agree, but as the minority

Report is rather fuller on this point I quote it—

"As to the earlier age of leaving there is no doubt that children are much more advanced educationally in regard to their age than was the case 10 or 15 years ago; children were then kept at school till 14 doing work which they now master at 12. Table 18 of Educational Department, Report 1886-7, p. 258, shows that of the total population under 15, 53·2 per cent were on the roll of inspected schools. In 1876, of the total population under 15, 40 per cent were on the roll of inspected schools. Taking the country throughout we are of opinion that during the last 10 years there has not merely been a great increase in the number of children under instruction, but a considerable prolongation of the duration of school life."

That is a very important statement, and one which is justified by the statistics which the Committee give. Well, my Lords, I have had to address your Lordships upon this subject two or three times lately, and the Motion of the right rev. Prelate does not in itself call for any observation. He asks us for information, the precise nature of which he does not specify. I can only say—and I am sure my noble Friend (Lord Norton) will bear me out—that the efforts which were made to supply the Royal Commission with every kind of statistic which could have been available for any purpose whatever seem to have been exhaustive. But at the same time, if my right rev. Friend will come to the Department and make known what it is exactly that he wants, if it be in existence it shall be pointed out to him, and if it does not exist it will, if there be no ground of great expense or other such objection against it, be given with the greatest pleasure.

The Bishop of LICHFIELD: I wish to thank the noble Viscount for the kindness with which he has met my request. I have no wish to prolong the discussion, which has taken a very much wider range than my Motion at all suggested.

THE LAW OF BIGAMY.

The following notice stood on the Paper, in the name of the Earl of Milltown:

"To call attention to the decision of the majority of the Judges in the Court for the Consideration of Crown Cases Reserved in the case of 'The Queen against Polson,' which appears to make a material alteration in the law of bigamy as it has hitherto been understood."

The LORD CHANCELLOR: Before the noble Lord puts the question of which he has given notice, I would venture to appeal to him and to suggest that the subject matter of this discussion is not one which is altogether proper to your Lordships' House. The matter to which the noble Lord directs attention is a decision of Her Majesty's Judges—divided in opinion—upon a certain state of the Criminal Law. I am quite sure that my noble and learned Friend does not mean to impeach the Judgment of the learned Judges by a discussion *à propos* of nothing, but the very terms of his Motion are, in truth, a challenge of the correctness of the decision, because he asks if a serious alteration has not been made in the law by that decision. I must say I cannot conceive anything more inconvenient than a discussion in this House, in which a decision of Her Majesty's Judges is to be called in question. That it is quite possible that different opinions may be held upon the matter, is sufficiently evinced by the fact that nine Judges were opposed to five. But what I earnestly deprecate is a discussion upon the subject of their decision. It may be quite right to discuss what the law is, and, if my noble Friend is dissatisfied with the law as it is held by the Judges to be, there is the obvious mode of remedying it by bringing in a Bill upon the subject, when the whole policy of the law can be properly discussed. But I do trust that he will not initiate a discussion in which the question necessarily must be whether a decision of Her Majesty's Judges is right or wrong.

The Earl of MILLTOWN: I quite see the force of what has fallen from my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack. The fact is, that it seemed to me that Her Majesty's Judges had, in this instance, somewhat exceeded their functions by deciding not what the intention of the Legislature had been, but what, according to their Lordships' judgment, the intention of the Legislature ought to have been. No doubt we must take what they have decided as being now, and always having been, the law of the land. We have, fortunately or unfortunately, no Court of Criminal Appeal in this country, and what has been determined by the Court for Consideration of Crown Cases Reserved must of course, pending legis-

lation, be taken to be the law of the land. At the same time, I cannot help calling attention to what is the effect of their Lordships' decision. The limit of seven years within which it has hitherto been generally considered extremely unsafe for persons to re-marry without certain and sure proof of the death of their husband or wife, has been practically abrogated; and, if the husband or wife *bonâ fide* believes in the death of his or her spouse—or rather, if he or she can persuade a jury to take that view—it appears, according to the law as now established, that no limit whatever is placed upon the period within which they may re-marry.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, that the Committee have added the Lord Monkswell to the Standing Committee for General Bills for the consideration of the Public Libraries Act (1855) Amendment Bill. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 16*th May*, 1889.

MOTIONS.

HOURS OF ADULT LABOUR (EUROPE AND UNITED STATES).

Address for—

"Return showing the Laws enacted affecting the Hours of Adult Labour in Europe and in the United States of America, with the actual hours now worked in the several Countries, and such information as is attainable as to the enforcement, or otherwise, of such Laws."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

HERRING BRAND SURPLUS APPROPRIATION (SCOTLAND.)

Return ordered—

"Of the Appropriation of £1,500 expended annually from the accumulated Herring Brand Surplus in Scotland for the extension of telegraphic communication to fishery districts, specifying the name of each Port to which telegraphic communication under this provision has been extended."—(*Mr. Duff.*)

POOR RATES (SCOTLAND)

Return ordered—

"For the last year available of the rate per pound of the Poor Rate in each Parish in Scotland."—(*Mr. Donald Crawford.*)

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.;

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 149]

Bill, as amended, to be taken into consideration upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 230.]

QUESTIONS.

THE BRITISH WEST INDIAN ISLANDS.

MR. WEBSTER: (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the area and extent of the cultivated land in the British West Indian Islands, and also the land lying waste but capable of being cultivated?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, Toxteth): The Secretary of State does not possess the detailed information necessary for answering the question put by my hon. Friend; but the tracts of land waste and capable of cultivation are very large. Thus, in Jamaica 598,173 acres were in 1887 "under cultivation and care," leaving 1,807,800 acres available for agricultural and pastoral purposes, exclusive of 270,000 acres not so available. Under the influence of the Sugar Bounties the area "under cultivation and care" had fallen since 1886 from 605,704 acres to 598,173 acres.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND) ACTS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to a sentence pronounced by a J.P. Court at Dunoon, ordering a fisherman, named Craig, who claimed the right to encamp on the foreshore, "to take down his tent, and remove the materials of which it was composed, and interdicting him from re-erecting his tent on the foreshore for all time to come"; and whether the offence charged against Craig was exclusively a technical one against the

Public Health (Scotland) Acts; and, if so, whether he would state under what section of those Acts the Court based its order for the removal of material not alleged to be a nuisance, or its interdict against the re-erection of the tent in such a form as to avoid the defects of structure on account of which it had been condemned?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): My attention was first called to this matter by the question of the hon. Member, and I have made inquiry, from which it appears that Craig was charged under the first Sub-section of Section 16 of the Public Health Act, in respect that his tent was injurious to health and unfit for human habitation or use. It was certified to be so by the Medical Officer, and after hearing evidence the Court found this proved. The Order was based on Section 19 of the Act.

NETLEY HOSPITAL.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Financial Secretary for War why it is that the time spent in Netley Hospital does not count for pay, seniority and pension with Officers of the Army Medical Staff, while it does count for Naval and Indian Medical Officers; and, is it the fact that Army Doctors in India are paid in rupees, although the contract is for them is for pay in pounds sterling, and that they are thereby considerable losers?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Candidates for the Medical Department of the Navy no longer pass through Netley, so that the question of pay, seniority, and pension does not arise as regards them. Whether Indian candidates will continue at Netley is still under consideration; but if they do, the practice as to dates will be assimilated with that obtaining for British officers. While at Netley an officer is only qualifying for his future duties, and receive 8s. a day as a surgeon on probation; he has no claim to reckon time towards increased pay or retired pay. Army medical officers serving in India are, like all other officers, paid in the currency of the country—namely, rupees. There cannot be any question of breach of contract, as the pay and allowances are in excess of those of officers serving out of India.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If there is to be a change, will it affect the officers who are already in possession of these advantages?

MR. BRODRICK: I will not have a retractive action. The present arrangement will continue until a settlement has been arrived at.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman hold out any hope as to the date at which a settlement will be arrived at?

MR. BRODRICK: Not at present.

THE CASE OF NUTHOO WILSON.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether he has yet received any further information as to the case of Nuthoo Wilson; whether he has now ascertained that Nuthoo Wilson is a British subject; and, whether he will lay upon the Table the Correspondence as to this case between Sir Auckland Colvin and Mr. Ross, late Commissioner Kamaun Division, and also the Report of Mr. Reed, the present Commissioner?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): My reply to the first question is in the affirmative. It is now ascertained that Nathoo Wilson is a native subject of the State of Tehri, and is not a British subject. The Correspondence and Report are not in the possession of the Secretary of State, but will be asked for if the hon. Member so desires.

MR. BRADLAUGH: May I put it down as an unopposed Return?

*SIR J. GORST: Yes, if the hon. Member wishes for them.

BUSHIRI.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any further information has been received by the Foreign Office that Captain Weissman has again attacked Bushiri, as appeared probable in the *Times* of the 13th instant; and, whether the Acting Consul-General could take immediate steps to negotiate between Bushiri and the German Authorities, in view of securing peace, so as to prevent a probable gross loss of life, utter annihilation of trade, and all good feeling

between the inhabitants of East Africa and the European nations generally?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.W.): No information has been received of a further attack on Bushiri. The Acting Consul General would have no right to intervene unless invited by the belligerents.

THE GOLD COAST.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a Report has yet been received from the Governor of the Gold Coast with reference to a memorial from the jurors at Accra, who in August last tried and acquitted two Tavieve chiefs on a charge of procuring the murder of Assistant Inspector Dalrymple, and whose verdict was afterwards overruled by the Legislative Council of the Gold Coast, which passed an ordinance for the imprisonment of those two prisoners, and of a third who had not even been tried, on the Governor's representation that they had been acquitted "in spite of the evidence"; if so, what action, if any, has been taken upon it; and if no Report has yet been received from the Governor whether the Secretary of State for the Colonies will call for one?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: In answer to questions put to me by my hon. Friend the senior Member for the City of London, on the 11th and 30th ult., I explained that the Secretary of State was awaiting the Governor's Report on the memorial. The Governor was reminded on the 30th ult. that the Report had not yet been received.

ARTILLERY OFFICERS.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War if it is true that after seven years' service as Majors of Artillery, these Officers are sometimes permitted, and sometimes forced, to go on half pay as Lieutenant Colonels; if it is the case that, when these officers again return to the regiment, they become seniors in Army rank to Officers who were formerly senior to them, but who have elected to serve on with their Batteries; and, if he can rectify the anomaly by which officers actually lose army rank by serving on instead of going on half-pay?

MR. BRODRICK: Majors of Royal Artillery, in common with the rest of the Army, under the terms of the Royal Warrant, elect to accept half-pay lieutenant-colonelcies, but they are never forced to do so. On their return to their regiment they take Army rank from the date of which they went on half-pay, and would thus be senior in Army rank to those officers who elected to serve with their batteries instead of accepting half-pay, some of whom might previously have been their seniors. As all the majors so affected have the same option, it was not anticipated at the time the Warrant was framed that any objection would arise, and as the class of officers who have this right is an expiring class, the Secretary of State does not propose to alter the Warrant.

THE CASE OF SARAH GUY.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the case of alleged cruelty in regard to Sarah Guy at Dorchester; and, whether the Public Prosecutor has determined on taking any steps in regard thereto?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): Yes, Sir; this case has been under the consideration of the Director of Public Prosecutions. A charge was at the time preferred in respect of the alleged offence, when the accused was discharged by the magistrate. A coroner's inquiry is now pending, and the case will again be fully investigated. What action, if any, the Public Prosecutor may take will depend on the result of that inquiry.

MONOPOLIST UNIONS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the continual announcement of unions to establish monopolies in and raise the price of the necessaries of life, he will watch what is being done, and will be prepared either to take action or to propose legislation in case it should appear that it can advantageously be done?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I am not aware that the projects refered to in the hon. Member's question have, as yet, had the

success he claims for them. I believe the fiscal policy which has for many years been pursued by this country, is our best defence against them; but I will certainly watch the progress of the projects that are afloat, and if any action, either by the Government or by the Legislature, should seem to me advisable, will press it on the attention of my colleagues.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he is not aware that the Salt Ring has succeeded in largely raising the price of salt?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: But I also observe that there is a strong competition in the salt trade.

THE VACCINATION COMMISSION.

MR. PICTON asked the President of the Local Government Board whether he can now state the names of the Commissioners to inquire into the working of the Vaccination Laws; whether the inquiry will be open to the public and the Press; and whether the pathology of cowpox and the sources of vaccine lymph will be within the scope of the Commission?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am not at present in a position to state the names of the Commissioners to inquire into the working of the Vaccination Laws. I am able to state, however, that Lord Herschell has consented to take the chair. In accordance with the invariable practice in the case of Royal Commissions, the inquiry will not be open to the public and the Press. With regard to the third point, as I have already stated in reply to a similar question, the terms of the reference have been communicated by me to the House, and I can give no further information as to the scope of the inquiry of the Commission.

MR. PICTON was understood to ask whether the scope of the inquiry would include the sources of vaccine lymph and the pathology of cowpox.

*MR. RITCHIE: I understand that gentlemen who take great interest in the matter are perfectly satisfied with the terms of the reference. They are very wide and inclusive, but matters of detail, such as that referred to by the hon. Member, must be decided by the Commission itself.

COWPOX AND VACCINATION.

MR. PICTON: May I ask whether the following sentence from the *Lancet*, of 24th December, 1887, states, with substantial accuracy, the purport of an observation made by the medical officer of the Board on Professor Crookshank's experience of Wiltshire cowpox, at a meeting of the Pathological Society, held 15th December, 1887:

> "His conclusion was that Professor Crookshank was in possession of some curious cases of cowpox arising apparently spontaneously, and the result of inoculation into human beings would be awaited with interest";

whether any human beings were inoculated, either by officers of the Local Government Board or within their knowledge, with lymph derived directly or indirectly from the Wiltshire cowpox; and, if so, what was the result; whether the question of using this lymph came before the National Vaccine Establishment; and, whether there was any report drawn up on the nature of the Wiltshire cowpox; and, if so, will he lay it upon the Table of the House?

*MR. RITCHIE: Dr. Buchanan informs me that the conclusion referred to in the quotation from the *Lancet* was that derivable from the description by Professor Crookshank of a disease which he regarded as identical with cow scarlatina. In rebutting this allegation, Dr. Buchanan expressed in the same terms as are quoted, his interest in any disease that could be called cowpox. The words following the above quotation in the *Lancet* report indicates his doubt about the nature of the cowpox under description. It is incorrect to attribute to his expressions any assent to the proposition that the disease under description was cowpox in the sense of being the disease which is produced for the purpose of protecting against smallpox. In fact, it was only on Professor Crookshank's authority that he assumed for the moment the nature of the disease. The cases had not been shown to the meeting at the time he drew his inference from Professor Crookshank's description. He does not know of any human being having been inoculated by officers of the Board with lymph, derived directly or indirectly from the Wiltshire disease, neither is

he aware of any inoculation with it by others, unless by accident in milking. No proposal to use this lymph has come before the National Vaccine Establishment. The only reports made to the Board as to the Wiltshire disease are those included in the last report of the medical officer of the Board, which has already been submitted to Parliament.

THE ESSEX BRIGADE ROYAL ARTILLERY.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, with reference to the 2nd Volunteer (Essex) Brigade Royal Artillery, whether, as every man for whom capitation is claimed must have attended gun practice, and as this corps rendered their return estimated to earn £351 in November, and are now notified that only £144 will be granted for the practice in question, he will consider the advisability of making up the deficit of £206 due to the Regiment under Paragraph 649 Volunteeer Regulations, taking into consideration the fact that the officers have provided harness for 23 horses, gunshed for battery, and paid £600 towards the legitimate expenses of the corps during the last ten years?

MR. BRODRICK: Arrangements have been made that all Volunteer corps which have applied to go into camp will be allowed to do so, and will get their full allowance. This was notified to the general officer commanding the Eastern district on Monday night. The whole question of camp allowances, and the limits to be fixed to them, will be re-considered before next year.

THE DORCHESTER TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANK.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether he could state to the House the total amount of the defalcations at the Dorchester Trustee Savings Bank; at what period the defalcations began, and when ended, when they were first discovered and by whom; whether it is true that false balance sheets have been forwarded to the National Debt Office, since the discovery was first made, with a view to conceal the frauds; and whether he can state if this was done with the knowledge of the trustees or auditor, and by whom?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The total amount of defalcations was—gross, £4,210 12s. 10d., of which the defalcator's family have repaid £682 0s. 3d.; net defalcation, £3,528 12s. 7d. The defalcations began in 1871, if not earlier, and ended with the death of the late actuary in October, 1882. They were first discovered by the present actuary, then a clerk in the office, a short time previous to the death of his predecessor, October, 1882. Since 1882 the books have been falsified by the present actuary so as to conceal the conduct of his predecessor, whose family were endeavouring to replace the money embezzled, but no further defalcations have taken place. These proceedings were not known to the trustees or auditor at the time they occurred. They first transpired at the commencement of the present year, when the trustees closed the bank with a view to winding up its affairs by transfer of the deposits to the Post Office or other savings bank, and the facts have been ascertained after a full inquiry by an independent firm of chartered accountants. The case has been brought before the Treasury by the National Debt Commissioners, and is now under consideration.

THE ORDNANCE SURVEY.

MR. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydfil) asked the First Commissioner of Works whether the practice and rule of the Ordnance Survey Department is to survey districts with a town population of not less than 4,000 on the $\frac{5}{500}$ scale; whether he is aware that the Mountain Ash Local Board district, now containing a town population of over 12,000, has only been surveyed on the $\frac{1}{2500}$ scale; and if he can state when the survey of that district upon the larger scale will be undertaken?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, University of Dublin) said he was informed that the district in which Mountain Ash was situated was surveyed some years ago, and as at that time it did not come properly under the definition of a town, it was only surveyed on the scale of $\frac{1}{500}$. It now contained a much larger population, but could not be re-surveyed on that ground alone. It was proposed to undertake the survey of parts of South

Wales upon a larger scale, and no doubt the case of Mountain Ash would then be considered.

MR. D. THOMAS: What would be the cost of a re-survey?

MR. PLUNKET: I will ascertain that from the Ordnance Survey Department if the hon. Member will repeat the question.

THE HATFIELD BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. WILLIAM McARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid., St. Austell) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the proceedings of the Hatfield Board of Guardians on Thursday last, from which it appears that when applications were then received for the post of nurse at the workhouse, one of the members drew the attention of the Board to the fact that one of the selected candidates was a Noncomformist, and had a letter of recommendation from Mr. Spurgeon; that the clerk was asked if it was necessary to have a member of the Church of England, and replied that they had always had a member of the Church of England; that Mr. Kidstone then said, "Well, we will not have that one who is recommended by Mr. Spurgeon;" and that the clerk was instructed to write the other candidates, asking them to wait upon the Board; and whether the Local Government Board have sanctioned this treatment of Noncomformists, or intend to take any action in the matter?

*MR. RITCHIE: It rests with the Guardians to determine what candidate they will select for the office of nurse at the workhouse, and if the Guardians select a suitable person the Local Government Board have no jurisdiction in the matter. The regulations issued by the Board do not, of course, require that a nurse shall be of any particular religious denomination.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucestershire, Cirencester): Do I understand that the Local Government Board propose to take no action in the matter?

*MR. RITCHIE: The Local Government Board have no action to take.

LORD WOLSELEY.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Judge Advocate General whether his attention has been called to a speech delivered on May 11th at Oxford by the Adjutant General, in which he is reported to have said, "they had political schemers longing for office, who would willingly see this United Kingdom torn into pieces if only they should once again flourish in Downing Street"; and whether such a declaration contravenes section 6, paragraph 9, of the Queen's Regulations; and, if so, what action it is contemplated to take in the matter?

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, Burghs) also asked whether it was in accordance with the rules of the permanent Civil and Military Services that a paid official should indulge in political invective of a partizan nature?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this question. My attention has been called to the address delivered by Lord Wolseley at Oxford on Saturday last. It was, of course, delivered by him in his private capacity, and not as Adjutant General. But, as regards the passage quoted in the question, I will say at once that it seems to me capable of the interpretation put upon it by hon. Members opposite, and therefore I should not be able to defend it, and I so informed Lord Wolseley. But I have also received a letter from Lord Wolseley which, with the permission of the House, I will read. He says:—

"As I find that an interpretation is put upon some expressions contained in a lecture I delivered at Oxford on Saturday last which they were not intended to convey, I wish to withdraw anything I said which can give pain to anyone."

MR. LABOUCHERE: Has the right hon. Gentleman asked Lord Wolseley what he did intend to convey?

*MR. STANHOPE: No, Sir; I do not think it, in the least part of my duty, to make that inquiry.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Is Lord Wolseley one of the officers of the British Army who have stated that, in the event of the establishment of a Home Rule Parliament for Ireland, they would not perform their duty?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

WIRE GUNS.

CAPTAIN SELWYN (Cambridge, Wisbeach) asked the Secretary of State

for War whether he can now state if it is a fact that the 6-inch wire gun made at Abouchoff fired 1,000 rounds with battering charges, after which the gun was taken to pieces and the same wire coiled on a new A-tube, thus providing a new gun at a very small cost and in a very short time; whether the gun is now firing another 1,000 rounds, 500 of which have been completed; whether the 6-inch guns at present used can only fire 395 rounds before the necessity arises for using augmentation strips; whether the whole of the naval guns having "liners" had to be re-manufactured; and whether this system of "liners" has been given up?

MR. BRODRICK: Information of a general character has been received, though its correctness cannot be vouched for, which tends to confirm the statements in the question as to the re-coiling of the wire. We know nothing, however, of the time taken or of the cost, except that the operation described involving a new tube must exceed considerably in cost the re-lining. Moreover, we have no information as to the erosion of the bore, which would effect the accuracy of firing. Our experience is that after about 400 rounds a 6-inch gun becomes inaccurate in fire in consequence of erosion of the bore; but this is amended by the use of augmenting strips on the projectile, and by this simple aid the gun is serviceable for many additional rounds without repair. The whole of the naval guns with "liners" did not require to be re-manufacturered. The system of "liners" has not been given up; but experience has shown that modification of the process hitherto followed is desirable.

IRELAND—TREATMENT OF MR. J. O'CONNOR, M.P.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if he has any information as to the health and treatment of the hon. Member for South Tipperary in Tullamore Gaol, and is he aware that Dr. Moorhead, J.P., one of the Visiting Justices, has reported that the honourable Member is confined in a flagged cell, and is suffering from rheumatism; and whether he will direct the Irish Prison Board to inquire into the matter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board inform me that from reports received from the Governor and medical officer of Tullamore Prison it appears that the hon. Member referred to has been placed in a flagged cell. There are no boarded ones in the prison. As, however, he was suffering from lumbago contracted previously to entering Clonmel Prison, his cell has been covered with cocoa matting and he has been allowed the use of a mattress. The medical officer further reports that the hon. Member is now almost free from the complaints and that his general health is good.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Why was this political prisoner removed from Clonmel to Tullamore?

MR. J. BALFOUR: I am unable to say why the prisoner was removed.

NAVY KNIVES AND RAZORS.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty if he could state the prices paid by the Government for the clasp knives and razors used in the Navy?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD, Lancashire, S.E., Ormskirk): In a Joint Report of the Admiralty and War Office, presented to Parliament in March, 1888, it was stated to be prejudicial to the public interests to publish the details of tenders received for stores, and to furnish the information desired by the hon. Member would be in contravention of that understanding.

INDIAN POST OFFICE—PROMOTION OF POSTMASTER GENERAL'S SON.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Postmaster General of India (Sir Frederick Hogg) has promoted his son, in the Postal Department, over the heads of a number of officers many years senior to him, from the fourth grade to the second grade, with an increase of salary from Rs. 200 per month to Rs. 300 rising to Rs. 400, and has also appointed him Superintendent of the Railway Mail Service in Burmah, an appointment carrying extra pay; and whether he will direct an inquiry to be made into the circumstances of this appointment?

*SIR. J. GORST: The Secretary of State has no information on the subject. Such appointments are in the discretion of the Local Authorities, and the Secretary of State would not specially direct the attention of the Government of India to the matter, unless some evidence that the appointment was an improper one were adduced.

MR. BRADLAUGH: The attention of the Under Secretary having been called to the circumstance, will he kindly consider the desirability of making an inquiry?

*SIR J. GORST: I said that the Secretary of State does not propose to make any special inquiry. Of course, every question to which the attention of the Government of India is directed, is inquired into, but in this case, no special inquiry is proposed to be made unless the hon. Member can give some reason showing that the case is a proper one for special inquiry.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Is not the appointment by the head of a Department of a relative to a post which carries with it increased remuneration, over the heads of senior officers, a case for inquiry?

*SIR J. GORST: The fact that a gentleman is the son of an eminent public officer is not, in the opinion of the Secretary of State in itself a disqualification for promotion in the public service.

SCOTLAND—SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION IN BURNTISLAND.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON asked the Lord Advocate whether the question of providing school accommodation in the landward district of the parish of Burntisland is still unsettled; and, if so, what steps will be taken by the Scotch Education Department in this matter?

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: The School Board of the parish of Burntisland have been in communication with the Department in regard to the site for a school, but there has been some delay owing to strong difference of opinion in the district. My Lords have suggested the expediency of providing a separate school for that part of the district which felt aggrieved by the proposal of the School Board, and they have again written to the School Board urging the necessity of an early settlement of the matter.

THE HOUSE DUTY.

LORD HENRY BRUCE (Wilts, Chippenham) asked the Secretary to the Treasury what was the amount of House Duty collected from tenement property alone?

MR. JACKSON: The term "tenement property" is rather a wide one, and I am not sure whether I am right in assuming that it means houses of the annual value of £20 and upwards, let to various tenants instead of only one. If this is so, I fear I cannot obtain the information required, as the assessments of such property are not kept separate from the bulk of House Duty assessments.

SCOTCH REVISED STATUTES.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether, since the Revised Statutes are being printed under the superintendence of the Government, the Statutes of the Scotch Parliament still in force will be printed?

MR. JACKSON: The Committee have not had this question before them, nor have they any power to revise and publish the Statutes referred to without legislation.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Why not? Are not the Revised Statutes of Scotland quite as good as those of England?

MR. JACKSON: Yes; I have no doubt they are quite as good; but in one case an Act of Parliament has been passed, which is not the case in regard to the Scotch Statutes.

FACTORY LABOUR IN INDIA.

MR. JAMES MACLEAN (Oldham) asked the Under Secretary of State for India if he can now inform the House whether the Secretary of State has come to any decision as to the proposed Amendment of the Law for the Regulation of Factory Labour in India?

*SIR J. GORST: The Government of India has recommended that a Bill should be introduced into the Indian Legislature making the following Amendments in the Indian Factory Act:—

(1) That the Act should be made to apply to any Factory in which not less than 20 hands are employed.

(2) That the age below which a child cannot be employed in a factory should be raised from 7 to 9 years.

(3) That the hours of work for women should be limited to 11 per diem.

(4) That the Local Governments should have power to make suitable sanitary rules and require Inspectors to enforce them, so as to secure the cleanliness and healthiness of the factories.

To these recommendations the Secretary of State has agreed, and has suggested two further Amendments:—

(5) That 4 days' holiday or absence per month, as agreed upon by the Bombay mill-owners, Bombay operatives, and Bombay Government, should be provided for.

(6) That the exemption of Government factories should not go beyond Sec. 93 of the English Act.

MR. MUNDELLA: May I ask whether the age of 9 is the age of half-time or whole time?

*SIR J. GORST: The age of 9 is now to be the age below which a child cannot be employed.

MR. MUNDELLA: How many hours are children of the age of 9 to work? Are they to work the same hours as women?

*SIR J. GORST: The right hon. Gentleman will find the hours of work of children in the India Factory Act. There is no restriction at all at present upon the hours of labour of women in India.

IRELAND—PRISONS—MR. CHIPPENDALE.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the General Prisons Board had decided to promote Mr. Chippendale, Governor of Armagh Prison, to the Governorship of a first class prison in Ireland on the first vacancy; and, if so, whether he will state the number of occasions on which Mr. Chippendale had been reprimanded in connection with his conduct when Governor of Mullingar Prison, and also since his transfer to Armagh; and, if he will give the number of Inspector's investigations which were held in Mullingar Prison during his time there, and also the number of such investigations held in Armagh since his appointment as Governor of that prison.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that they have not decided to promote Captain Chippendale, as suggested in the question.

MR. TUITE: Will an inquiry be made as to the charges which have been made against Mr. Chippendale?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware, nor have I inquired, seeing that there was no suggestion of the kind in the question.

PROBATE DUTIES.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer why it is that, under "The Probate Duties (Scotland and Ireland) Act, 1888," the Scotch Sections were only passed for a year, whereas the Irish Sections are perpetual, and therefore the distribution of the money and the policy of the grants are withdrawn from the annual control of Parliament; is it intended that the £5,000 to the Royal Dublin Society for breeding purposes shall be an annual grant, without any power to criticize its expenditure; and, will the Government consider the advisibility of repealing a measure passed at a very late period of the Session (24th December) when its provisions could not be accurately appreciated by many Members?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The Probate Duties (Scotland and Ireland) Act, as introduced by the Government, provided for the distribution of the Probate Duty grant both in Scotland and Ireland "until otherwise provided by Parliament." In deference to the pressure of Scotch Members, the Scotch portion of the Bill was so altered as to apply only to one financial year. No similar representations were made by hon. Members for Ireland, and the Irish Sections were passed in their original form. The annual grant to the Royal Dublin Society, like other Irish grants under the Bill, will continue to be made "until otherwise provided by Parliament." There is no desire to withdraw the expenditure of the grant from the cognizance of Parliament, and a Report will be furnished every year of the manner in which the money is applied. The Government see no reason to repeal the Act. The natural time for reconsidering its provisions, if such reconsideration should appear necessary, will be when it is possible to introduce a Local Government Bill for Ireland.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of of Ireland whether, as the Royal Irish

Constabularly on all occasions refuse to give their names to persons complaining of their conduct, the Government would consider the advisability of permitting them to wear numbers as English police and Dublin police do; and, what is the rule of the Force on the subject of giving names when requested by persons to do so?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Inspector General reports that the allegation in the first paragraph of the question is not accurate, and with regard to the suggestion that distinguishing numbers should be assigned throughout the Constabulary Force generally, I would refer the hon. and learned Member to my reply to a question put on 26th February last, by the hon. Member for the Holmfirth Division of York. There is no rule which requires a constable to give his name when it is asked, but it is the custom for a constable to do so when the request is reasonably made.

MR. T. M. HEALY: On two or three occasions the Constabulary have refused to give me their names.

MR. MAC NIELL (Donegal, S.): Why was it that a constable at Falcarragh refused to give me his name when I asked him to show an English lady an emergency man?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I can only conjecture that the constable thought the request an unreasonable one.

THE PONSONBY ESTATE.

MR. FLYNN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it is a fact that 30 summonses for possession of their holdings were served on Monday by registered letter on the Ponsonby tenants, Youghal; if it is true, as stated in the local newspaper, that a large number of police, under District Inspector Ewart, assembled at Gurtroe to prevent the ploughing up of their lands by the tenants who have thus been turned into caretakers under the 7th Section of the Land Act, 1887, and that a large number of people gathered on the scene; whereupon Mr. Ewart immediately declared that the presence of the people created an illegal assembly, and ordered the police to charge them with the batons, the result being that a number of persons were assaulted by the constables with batons and rifles, and many severely hurt; and, further, that one of the tenants named Philip Dea, who persisted in ploughing up his land, was arrested and taken to the police barracks at Youghal; if he will state whether the police were acting in accordance with their instructions in charging a number of people who had committed no breach of the peace; and under what statute or authority did the Police Inspector act in interfering with the tenant who continued to plough the land?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the facts are as stated in the first paragraph of the question. The police did warn the people that they were committing an unlawful and malicious injury in ploughing up the crops on the farms, and called upon them to desist, which they did in some cases. In one case a crowd collected and encouraged the man to continue the unlawful proceeding, and to persist in his refusal to give his name to the police. The District Inspector warned the crowd of the unlawful nature of the assembly, and required them to disperse, and as they did not move he directed the police to force them back. This was done without any charge or any violence; no one was, so far as the District Inspector is aware, hurt by a baton or a rifle, and no complaints were made. Dea was arrested for persisting in the malicious injury. The arrest was made under the Malicious Injuries Act.

MR. FLYNN: In view of the fact that no magistrate's order was obtained was any offence, civil or criminal, committed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If they were guilty of no offence, civil or criminal, I presume that that fact would be a case for a Court of Law. If the hon. Gentleman requires further information he had better put a question down on the Paper.

GREYSTONES HARBOUR.

MR. WILLIAM CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury if a memorial has been received from the inhabitants of Greystones, county Wicklow, in which it is stated that the harbour recently constructed there at a cost of £10,000 is useless, being almost completely filled up with shingle; whether any inquiry has been made as to the truth of the statement; and what course the Treasury propose to take so as to make the harbour available for the use of the fishermen?

MR. JACKSON: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to defer the question for a week.

FAIR RENTS IN DOWN.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the recently published list of fair rent applications to be heard by the County Down Sub-Commission at their next sitting at Newtownards, in which it is stated that the stated that Land Commissioners have in this instance listed, and in future intend "to list," cases that are grouped together irrespective of the order in which the originating notices are received by the Land Commission; whether he is aware that there are still unheard some thousands of cases in the county of Down where the tenants are entitled to the benefit of the reduction on the rent running from 1st May, 1887, and that the Marquess of Londonderry and other landlords in the county have taken legal proceedings to compel such tenants to pay the old renting the fixing of the fair rent; and whether he will point out to the Land Commission the hardship of still further delaying these cases by not disposing of them in the order in which they were served on the Commission?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that they have decided in future to list cases, not only by reference to dates of receipt of application, but also by reference to the relative position of the holdings. They find that by doing so the disposal of outstanding cases will be expedited, as time now wasted in travelling will be saved, and all cases within limited areas in which originating notices have been received within comparatively the same time, will thus be disposed of simultaneously. All originating notices from the County Down received in their Office before October 28, 1887, have been already listed. Expedition, and not delay, must in their opinion result from the change of method adopted by the Commissioners.

REGISTERS OF PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether he proposes to take any steps to extend the time for the completion of the Registers of Parliamentary Voters and County Electors, having regard to the fact that the day appointed under the law as it stands for the completion of the Register, viz., the 20th October, lessens by over nine weeks the time for printing than heretofore, and must largely increase the cost, and may result in a break down in the operation.

*MR. RITCHIE: The question of my hon. Friend is very similar to that of the hon. Member for Anglesey on the 9th of this month. As I then stated, a Bill has been introduced on this subject, and the measure will receive the careful consideration of the Government.

FEVER IN RICHMOND BARRACKS, DUBLIN.

MR. WARDLE (Derbyshire, S.) asked the Financial Secretary for War whether it is true that there have been several cases of typhoid fever in the South Wales Borderers, now stationed at Richmond Barracks, Dublin; and, whether the cause has been traced to the insanitary condition of the barracks; and, if so, whether the Government will move the regiment whilst the drains are put in order?

MR. BRODRICK: Since the beginning of this year four cases of enteric fever have been admitted to hospital from the Richmond Barracks. Mr. Rogers Field is about to report on the sanitary condition of these barracks, which he has been carefully investigating.

MR. WARDLE: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that two fresh cases have occurred since Monday, making eight cases altogether?

MR. BRODRICK: I was not aware that that was the case. I will make inquiry.

In reply to Lord H. Bruce,

MR. BRODRICK said the Secretary of State was giving careful consideration to the condition, as a whole, of the Dublin Barracks.

GRANTS IN AID OF LOCAL TAXATION.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Lord Advocate whether the Return ordered 27th March last, Local Taxation (Scotland) (Grants in Aid), will be printed and in the hands of Members before the Second Reading

of the Local Government (Scotland) Bills; and, what is the cause in the delay in presenting the Return, seeing that the Return is only "in as far as said information may be in possession of the Secretary for Scotland."

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: The Return, if confined strictly to the material described in the second branch of the question, can be laid on the Table this week, and as the hon. Gentleman seems to desire it, this will be done. In order to make the Return complete, it had been proposed to wait until certain figures had been obtained, some of which cannot be available until the end of this month.

THE MEDALS FOR THE BURMESE WAR.

LORD HENRY BRUCE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, why the medal for war service in Burmah was not presented to the naval forces engaged at the same time as the military; and, whether, in anticipation of the naval review, it can now be granted.

MR. FORWOOD: In reply to the noble Lord the Member for Wilts, I have to say that the medals in question are prepared by the Indian Government. The delay has occurred in consequence of a doubt as to the precise conditions under which they should be granted. Final instructions were sent by telegram on 6th instant to the Naval Commander in Chief to receive the medals from the Authorities in India, and issue them to the men on the station, and to send the remainder to England for distribution. It is not probable, however, that they can be received in England in time for distribution before the naval review.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (TONNAGE) BILL.

MR. PETER M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention had been called to the number of Petitions presented to the House in favour of the passing of the Merchant Shipping (Tonnage) Bill, as introduced; and, if so, whether, considering the general desire of the harbour authorities of the United Kingdom, he will recommend the measure to be passed in its present form.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: A considerable number of petitions have been presented in favour of the Bill, and I hope that the measure may become law in a manner which will be approved by the harbour authorities and the shipping interest. I am now endeavouring to effect an agreement on the subject.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to move the reference of this Bill to the Grand Committee on Trade, and in that event, will he arrange that the Bill shall be taken by the Committee immediately?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I propose to place on the Paper a notice of my intention to move that the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade, and I understand that that course will be generally acceptable. Of course, it will be necessary to add to the Members of the Committee some hon. Members who are specially qualified to deal with the question.

THE EGYPTIAN RAILWAY LOAN.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is a fact, as stated in the papers, that Her Majesty's Government intend to carry out the conversion of the Egyptian Railway five per cent Preference Loan into a four per cent loan, notwithstanding the express undertaking printed on the bond, from the decrees of 1876, as follows, "the loan to bear interest at the rate of five per cent per annum, payable half-yearly on the 15th April and 15th October each year, and redeemable at par in 65 years by half yearly drawings;" to this is added the Sinking Fund table, drawn up to allow the payment of the loan in 65 years; whether he is aware that six of the most eminent counsel, including Sir Horace Davey, Sir Charles Russell, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Arthur Cohen, &c., have given opinions that the conversion would be an illegal act; and, when Messieurs Rothschilds were consulted as to the conversion, and what commission is to be paid to them for bringing out the new loan?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand): Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to answer the question instead of my right hon. Friend. The conversion is to be carried out by the Egyptian and not

by Her Majesty's Government, which is only concerned with other Great Powers in giving assent to the proposals of the Egyptian Government, and before giving such assent they had consulted the law officers of the Crown, and had satisfied themselves of the legality of the proposed measure. The Government are not aware what steps Messieurs Rothschild have taken with regard to the conversion, nor was it necessary to consult the Government in any way as to the commission paid to that firm.

IRELAND—PRISON TREATMENT OF MEMBERS.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he can state to the House the number of Irish Members now suffering imprisonment under the Crimes Act, and how many of them are being treated as common criminals?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that there were on the 15th inst. ten Irish Members undergoing imprisonment under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, all of whom were being treated as ordinary convicted criminal prisoners, with the exception of Mr. Cox, a first class misdemeanant, whose sentence has just expired, and those of the prisoners who have been arraigned before the Special Commission, who are permitted special privileges to prepare for their defence.

THE MURDER OF INSPECTOR MARTIN.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, is it the fact that of the persons charged with the murder of District Inspector Martin, the Crown have changed the venue from Donegal to Queen's County in the cases of the unbailed prisoners? Do they intend to try in the County Donegal Father M'Fadden and the other accused persons charged with the murder who have been admitted to bail; if so, what is the reason of the distinction in the respective venues; is it considered that Donegal is an unsuitable venue for the unbailed prisoners, and a suitable one for such of the accused as were admitted to bail? And, what are the intentions of the Crown as to the trial of Father M'Fadden and the bailed accused?

MR. A. J. BAFOUR: I am advised that it is a fact that the venue has been changed in the case of the unbailed prisoners from Donegal to the Queen's County. As to the bailed prisoners, their case is before the Attorney General for Ireland, who will give such directions as to the mode and place of their trial as he in his discretion thinks consistent with a due administration of the criminal law.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As a number of these men are very poor, and it is a matter of extreme concern to them to know at an early date what the intentions of the Government are in regard to them, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman how soon he will be able to inform the House of the decision of the Attorney General?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not a matter in my Department, but I am quite sure that the Attorney General for Ireland will do his best to expedite matters.

In reply to a question by Mr. Sexton,

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said: The case of Father M'Fadden does not differ from that of the other prisoners. I have no doubt, as I have stated to the hon. Member for North Longford, that there will be no unnecessary delay.

INDIA—CONTRACTS—ROSS AND COMPANY.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM asked the Under Secretary for India if the firm of Ross and Company, about the quality of whose stores at Woolwich a serious accusation was sustained, had secured Contracts for the India Office and Police.

*SIR J. GORST: No contracts have been made with Messrs. Ross & Co., but contracts have been made with Messrs. Oastle & Palmer, who are believed to be intimately connected with that Firm. The matter has only recently been brought to the notice of the Secretary of State, and is at the present moment the subject of inquiry and consideration.

IRELAND—THE FALCARRAGH EVICTIONS.

MR. MAC NEILL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any investigation had taken place into the charge brought by a Mrs. Coyle, who had been evicted from her holding in Falcarragh, that

eight ducks, her only property, had been stolen by the Military; whether on Mrs. Coyle making this complaint in the presence of the hon. Members for Camborne, West Donegal, and South Donegal, Mr. Huddy, an Inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary, took a note of the matter, and promised to make it the subject of the strictest investigation; whether this theft was frequently referred to in the evidence at the trial of Mr. Harrison; and, whether, at the time of this theft, soldiers were quartered in the district in and around Falcarragh?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The constabulary authorities report that the police made every possible inquiry into the charge brought by Mrs. Coyle that eight of her ducks had been stolen, but could get no information to show that the Military had anything whatever to do with the theft. The reply to paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 is in the affirmative.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the President of the Board of Trade if he can state how many applications have been received for the appointment of Sea Fishery Committees under the Sea Fishery Regulation Act of last year, and if any scheme for the representation of the persons most likely to be affected by the appointment of such Committees has yet been approved; and if, in view of the considerable decrease in the supplies of prime fish evidenced by the statistics just published, the Board of Trade will facilitate the appointment of Sea Fishery Committees at as early a date as possible?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: To the present time, four applications for the appointment of Sea Fisheries Committees under the Sea Fisheries Regulation Act of last year have been received at the Board of Trade. In addition to these, several requests have been made for copies of the Rules issued by the Board of Trade for the guidance of applicants when making such formal applications. No general scheme for the representation of persons affected by the appointment of such Committees has been approved, as the various cases must obviously be dealt with upon their merits. Whilst I am not prepared to admit that there has been a considerable decrease in the supplies of prime fish, the Board of Trade have done everything in their power to facilitate the appointment of Sea Fisheries Committees, and will continue to do so.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether a country not included in the Convention, which does not itself produce sugar, and gives no bounty, but deals in sugar originally derived from some bounty-giving country as ordinary merchandize, will be allowed to export sugar to Great Britain; whether an inquiry must be instituted as to the previous history of each cargo and the sugar excluded, under Article 7, Section 1, if it can be shown that at any former period, it had "come from" a bounty-giving country; would such exclusion be applied in all countries with whom we have most-favoured nation treaties or treatment, not being sugar-producing countries; and, in the last alternative, in what manner, and by what tribunal, would the inquiry as to each cargo be conducted and the exclusion decreed, as, for instance, in the case of the export of a surplus stock of sugar from Denmark which was originally derived from France?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: By the third paragraph of Article VII. of the Sugar Convention, it is provided that the High Contracting Parties shall concert as to the measures which the Permanent International Commission to be established under the Convention may consider necessary in order to prevent bounty-fed sugar passing in transit through one of the contracting countries from enjoying any of the advantages of the Convention. But I understand the question of the right hon. Gentleman to relate to sugar coming from a bounty-giving country into a non-bounty-giving country which is outside the Convention, and becoming in the latter country the subject of ordinary commercial transactions. That is no doubt a different point, and raises a question of considerable practical difficulty. But I think it is obvious under the provisions of the Convention that the subject, including the points noticed in the three last paragraphs of

the right hon. Gentleman's question, would have to be very carefully considered by the International Commission to which I have referred, and that pending such consideration, no definite answer could be given to his question.

SIR W. HARCOURT: My question had nothing to do with the countries under the Convention. I am speaking of countries outside the Convention, such as Denmark, and asking whether, Denmark having sugar to dispose of to Great Britain, an inquiry would be made where the sugar came from, and if it came from a bounty-giving country, say France, Denmark would be refused admission for her sugar into Great Britain. This is not a question of detail, but a question of principle. It is whether or not there would be required what was known in the bad old times as a "certificate of origin" with regard to the sugar.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: As I have endeavoured to explain, that is a question which would have to be discussed in the first place by the International Commission, and then the recommendations of the Commission would have to be considered by the Conference, by the Governments parties to the Sugar Convention. The right hon. Gentleman will see that, as of course we shall have to be represented at the International Commission, I have no business beforehand on the part of the Government with regard to it.

SIR W. HARCOURT: But my question assumes that the countries to be affected would not be represented at the International Commission. That is to say, a country like Denmark is not a party, and the question is, what would be her position? I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether this question has been considered by the Conference before the treaty was signed?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Not having been myself in the Conference, and not having been a party to it, I cannot say. But the question of the right hon. Gentleman is, not what Denmark or other countries outside the Convention would do, but what a country inside the Convention would be bound to do to Denmark.

CHILD MARRIAGE IN INDIA—THE CASE OF THE GIRL LUCKMIN.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the case of the Indian Christian girl Luckmin, who has been claimed by a Hindoo man as his wife against her will; whether she states that she is a child widow, and therefore cannot be married to this man; whether she also states that she is over 14 years of age, and therefore entitled to be her own mistress; whether she further states, and whether Miss Abraham, the missionary with whom she was living also states, that the girl's mother sold her to this man for immoral purposes; whether Luckmin has been handed over to this man by the Court, in spite of her protests; and whether he has made inquiries into the facts of the case and the decision of the Court?

SIR J. GORST: The attention of the Secretary of State was called to this case by a question in the House of Commons in December last. The case has since been the subject of an appeal to the High Court of Bengal. The Judgment of the High Court delivered by Justices Mitter and Macpherson answers all the questions of the hon. Member:—(1.) Whether the girl states that she is a child widow and therefore cannot be married to the man;

"The Magistrate has found on ample evidence that there was a marriage which would be valid if the parties were not incapable of contracting, and that there is no ground for holding that they were incapable. The marriage is said to be illegal because according to caste custom, widows are not allowed to marry and because one of the parties is of higher social status than the other. It is only necessary to point out that widow-marriages are now legalized, and that although a marriage may be improper according to caste-custom it is not on that account illegal."

(2.) Whether the girl states that she is over 14 years of age, and therefore entitled to be her own mistress;

"The Magistrate took evidence and found that the girl was under 14. There is no reason to suppose that the facts have been wrongly determined by the Magistrate. There is ample evidence to support his conclusion."

(3.) Whether the girl further states, and whether Miss Abraham also states that the girl's mother sold her to the man for immoral purposes;

"Nothing of the sort is established. It is not even alleged that the mother has led, or is now leading, an immoral life. All that is charged is that by giving her daughter to a man to whom she was not married, she abandoned her and left her to lead a life of prosti-

tution. The truth of this charge depends upon whether there was or was not a marriage. But the whole charge of immorality falls to the ground when it is found, as the Magistrate has found, that even if there were any legal defect in the marriage this was unknown to the mother and Radha Kishen (the husband), both of whom believed that a valid marriage had taken place.'

(4.) Whether the girl has been handed over to this man by the Court in spite of her protests;

"An order for restoration was made, and with the consent of Radha Kishen (the husband), the girl was handed over to her mother. The Magistrate has no power to make the order which he did. The question remains whether, in setting it aside, we should undo what was done in giving effect to it, and replace the girl in the charge of the person from whom she was taken. We have no hesitation in saying that if the Magistrate had the power which he thought he had, he, in our judgment, exercised it very properly on the facts before him. It does not, therefore, follow that because we now find he had not the power, we should as a matter of course, restore the state of things which existed when the order was made. We are in fact asked to take the child from the charge of her mother or husband, in one or other of whose custody she is, and either of whom the law regards as her proper and natural guardian, and make her over to a stranger whose detention of the child, against the will of her mother or husband, would be *prima facie* illegal.

MR. M'LAREN: Will the hon. Gentleman allow me to see the Judgment if he has it in his possession?

SIR J. GORST: I shall be happy to lay it on the Table as soon as I get it, if the hon. Member will move for it.

SEA FISHERIES.

MR. ROWNTREE asked the President of the Board of Trade, when the Report of the Inspector of Sea Fisheries for this year will be in the hands of Members, and if in future the Annual Report of the Inspector, and the Annual Statistics of Sea Fisheries, can be presented together as one document, instead of being presented, as they now are, at different times, and in different sizes?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The Report of the Inspector of Sea Fisheries was presented to the House of Commons on the 9th inst., and will most probably be in circulation in a very few days. The Annual Statistics of Sea Fisheries are published in the form recommended by the Statistical Inquiry Committee, and almost all statistical publications are in that form; and there are good reasons why it should not be departed from in the case of statistics. Mr. Malan's Report is in the form employed for the Report of the Chief Inspector in the matter of Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries, for the Reports of the Scotch Fishery Board, and for some of the Reports in the case of the Irish Fisheries. There seems to be no sufficient reason why the Reports of the Inspectors should be published in the same form as the Annual Statistics of the Sea Fisheries of the United Kingdom. But efforts will be made to present the two documents referred to at as nearly the same time as possible.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT.—THE BIRCHGROVE COLLIERY.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Glamorgan) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to the adjourned inquest held on the bodies of the men, George Griffiths, John Richards, and Lewis Williams, who perished in the inundation at the Birchgrove Colliery on 16th April; and, whether, having regard to the manner in which the provisions of the Mines Act were disregarded by the manager of that colliery when approaching the Cwmdu old workings, and the evidence of the Mines Inspector upon that point, and the two verdicts that were delivered respecting the same, the first amounting to a verdict of manslaughter upon the colliery manager, and the second, after the interference of the Coroner, being reduced to one of censure upon him, although the jury again alleged that the loss of life was caused through the negligence of the manager of the colliery in not having the 13th Section of the Mines Act carried into force, he will direct either that a formal investigation of that accident and its causes shall be made, under Section 45 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1887, or that an inquiry be made into the competency of the manager to further hold his certificate of management under the said Act?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have carefully read the accounts of the Coroner's inquest on the accident at the Birchgrove Colliery. I cannot find that there were two verdicts. The jury in the first instance, and again after further deliberation, negatived such culpable negligence in the manager as to amount to manslaughter. I have, however,

directed a prosecution of the manager under the 13th General Rule of the Mines Act.

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General whether he is aware that there are in Zanzibar a French and an English Post Office, and that the postage to England for letters sent through the French Post Office is 2½d. and the postage to England for letters sent through the English Post Office is 5d.; and whether he will take steps to remedy this difference of postage rate?

MR. JACKSON: The Postmaster General is aware of the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member. As he has before explained with reference to similar postage rates levied at Shanghai and other places where France maintains postal agencies side by side with the British postal agencies, the French Post Office charges the minimum Postal Union rate of 20d. on all letters throughout the extent of the Postal Union, while the British Post Office is obliged to levy an additional charge to cover the cost of sea and land transit. There does not seem to be any inherent justice in the demand that a letter should be carried for less than it costs and the additional charge be thrown upon the general taxation of the country.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON also asked the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that newspapers are sent from Tasmania to England free of charge, and that newspapers from England to Tasmania are charged 1d. each; and what is the reason for this, and how is the postage divided?

Mr. JACKSON: The arrangement as to newspapers made between this country and the Australian Colonies when the all sea route to Australia was abandoned in 1880 was that newspapers should continue to be charged, as before, a postage rate of 1d. each. That arrangement was still adhered to generally, and the Postmaster General is not aware under what exceptional circumstances Tasmania sends its newspapers to this country free of charge. It is understood to be a privilege granted to local newspapers by the Legislature of Tasmania. There is no division of the postage on newspapers transmitted between this country and the colonies by the Imperial Contract Mail services. Each side keeps the postage it collects.

IRELAND—MURDER OF INSPECTOR MARTIN.

MR. MAC DONALD, Queen's County, Ossory), asked the Solicitor General for Ireland, whether it is true that, in the case of the men accused of the murder of District Inspector Martin, the Government intend to change the venue from Donegal to the Queen's County; and, if so, seeing that all the accused are Roman Catholics, and that at least two-thirds of the special jurors of the Queen's County profess the same faith, whether he can give an assurance to the House that the Crown will not exercise the power of "stand aside" in such a way as to exclude a reasonable number of Roman Catholics from the jury which will try the case?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. MADDEN, University of Dublin): The venue has been changed in the case of some of the persons accused of the murder of Inspector Martin. I can make no further statement with regard to the pending trials than to say that the Crown will in this case, as in others, endeavour to secure a fair and impartial trial of the accused, and that in no case has the Crown ordered jurors to stand aside on account of their religious belief.

MR. MAC DONALD: Is it not the fact that at the Queen's County summer Assizes last year a large number of the Catholic special jurors of the county presented a memorial to Judge Johnson protesting against their exclusion; and will the hon. and learned Gentleman take that fact into consideration in this case, seeing that it is to these poor men a question of life and death?

MR. MADDEN: If the persons who signed the memorial were under the impression that they were excluded on account of their religion, I believe they were mistaken.

DISTRICT INSPECTOR MARKHAM.

MR. SEXTON asked the Solicitor General for Ireland under what circumstances District Inspector Markham, of the Irish Constabulary, has been reduced in rank, as the result of an investigation by a constabulary court of inquiry; and whether the evidence and

report of the court of inquiry and the minute of the Inspector General thereon will be laid upon the Table?

MR. MADDEN: The Inspector General reports that the District Inspector mentioned, having been found by a departmental court of inquiry to have failed in his duty in connection with the occurrences on the night of the 30th of January, has been reduced, not in rank, but to the bottom of the list of his class. The inquiry having been a departmental one, it would be contrary to custom to lay the papers upon the Table.

MR. SEXTON: Is it not the fact that this Inspector, by his prudent action on one occasion, prevented a conflict between the police and the people, and is it not usual to admit the Press to such inquiries? Is the hon. and learned Gentleman prepared to offer evidence which will enable the House to judge of the justice of the sentence passed upon Inspector Markham?

MR. MADDEN: It is not the custom to admit the Press to departmental inquiries, and the facts are not such as the hon. Member suggests.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): The real crime was a hesitancy to shoot the people.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman quite certain that the press were not present at the inquiry? I was there, and I was told that it was an open inquiry.

MR. SEXTON: When we come to vote the salary of the Inspector General it will be necessary to determine whether that officer has acted properly in this instance or not.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is it really contended that this man should be practically branded with a charge of cowardice by two gentlemen selected by the Inspector General to investigate the case; and is the House to be deprived of all opportunity of judging whether the finding of these gentlemen under the extraordinary circumstances of the case was just?

MR. MADDEN: The specific question put to me by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Belfast (Mr. Sexton) was whether the evidence and report of the Court of Inquiry will be laid upon the table, and I gave the only answer it was possible for me to give.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF BAGAMOYO.

MR. F. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in a position to state what compensation, if any, will be received from Germany by the British subjects who suffered injury at the bombardment of Bagamoyo?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: As I stated in answer to the hon. Member for Northampton, Her Majesty's Government are not entitled by International Law to ask for compensation for the losses suffered by British subjects in consequence of the hostilities at Bagamoyo. No compensation was payable by the British Government for losses suffered by subjects of other States in consequence of operations at Alexandria.

MR. STEVENSON: Have not the Government intervened in respect of the Tunghi bombardment?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No, Sir; I have stated that, the forms of war having been observed, we are not in a position to claim damages, although we strongly disapproved of the action taken there.

POISONED EGGS.

MR. FRANCIS STEVENSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the report of the coroner's inquest, held at Brandon on Monday last, on the body of a labourer, who died after eating a hen's egg, containing strychnine, which had been placed on the ground by a gamekeeper on an estate; whether he is aware that the jury returned a verdict of "death from misadventure;" and, whether it is to be understood that the law, which forbids poisoned flesh or meat to be laid about, does not include poisoned eggs within its prohibition?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have seen the matter alluded to in the newspapers, but I have received no information on the subject at the Home Office. I conclude from the verdict that the affair was a pure accident, and is no doubt much to be regretted; but it does not appear to me that the verdict at all affects the question whether an egg is flesh or meat within the Poisoned Flesh Prohibition Act, to which I understand the question refers.

MR. F. STEVENSON: As the law now stood, is it possible for a man to place poisoned eggs upon the ground, and if fatal consequences ensued he will not be liable to any penalty?

MR. MATTHEWS: That is a legal question on which the Member's hon. opinion would be of as much value as my own. He can raise the question, by action or otherwise, whether an egg is flesh or meat.

ZANZIBAR.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what is the reason for the delay in presenting to the House the Papers relating to the affairs of Zanzibar, which were stated by the First Lord of the Treasury, on 21st February, to be then in preparation; and when it is intended to lay these Papers upon the Table?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: As I stated a few days ago, there was a certain misapprehension about the Papers referred to. Papers bringing down the record of events to the commencement of the blockade, had just been distributed, and probably the First Lord of the Treasury referred to these; but there are no further Papers which could now be presented with advantage.

MR. BRYCE: When may we expect Papers to be presented?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I cannot say how soon it will be convenient to present them.

IRELAND—THE LAND PURCHASE ACT.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Notts., Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what are the total sums applied for and sanctioned as advances under the Land Purchase (Ireland) Acts, 1885 and 1888, up to the 30th April, 1889?

MR. JACKSON: The total sums applied for and sanctioned as advances under the Land Purchase (Ireland) Acts, 1885 and 1888, up to April 30th, 1889, are £6,759,182 and £5,319,481 respectively.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY'S ESTATE.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what sum has been sanctioned as an advance under the Land Purchase (Ireland) Acts, 1885 and 1888, for the purchase of tenancies from the Marquess of Londonderry; and, what is the number of holdings so purchased and their total area?

MR. JACKSON: No applications have been made for advances under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Acts on the estate of the Marquess of Londonderry.

THE KHEDIVE'S FINANCIAL ADVISER.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Financial Adviser to the Khedive was appointed on the recommendation of Her Majesty's Government; whether he is now in England negotiating the conversion of one portion of the Egyptian Loan; whether charges have been publicly made affecting his conduct as Financial Agent, especially in reference to the estates of the Khedivial Family; and, whether Her Majesty's Government can take any steps to clear him from these charges?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The appointment of Sir E. Vincent as Financial Adviser to the Khedive was sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government on the application of the Egyptian Government. He is now in England on the business of the Egyptian Government, including negotiations connected with the Privileged Debt. Her Majesty's Government have no official knowledge of charges having been made affecting his conduct as Financial Agent, and Her Majesty's Government have no intention of taking any steps in regard to such charges. The Correspondence respecting the arrangement with regard to the estates of the Khedivial Family were laid before Parliament last year.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in stating that he did not know that the Protectionists in France were using the Sugar Convention to the detriment of England commerce, he was aware of the letter of the political economist, Raoul Frary, in *La France* of 19th April, in which the following passage occurs:—

"Amongst us at present there is an almost irresistible movement, which the Government and the Chambers have difficulty in repelling, to raise the duties on imports. . . . Up to this

time England, by its attachment to Free Trade, has forced us to concede to her the most favoured nation treatment. The exclusion of our sugar will restore our liberty. There must be great ignorance of our Protectionists if it is supposed that they will not profit by it. Baron de Worms is striking a more baneful blow to British industry than to French industry."

And whether, under these circumstances, he will inform the House as soon as possible when the judgment of Parliament will be taken upon the Convention?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am sorry to be obliged to acknowledge that I never heard of the letter to which the right hon. Gentleman refers, and I do not myself recognize M. Frary as an authority on matters of policy in France. The House will be informed as soon as possible when they will be invited to consider the Bill to give effect to the Convention.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that manufacturers of jams, confectionery, biscuits, and aerated waters, who have been making arrangements for enlarging their manufactories and business premises, have been obliged to suspend their plans, and are suffering inconvenience and loss, in consequence of the uncertainty which exists as to whether the Sugar Convention Bill will or will not be proceeded with; and when he will be in a position to remedy this by making a definite statement upon the subject?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am not aware of the facts stated by the hon. Member, and I cannot but think that the manufacturers alluded to have greater shrewdness than to suspend any part of their business pending the settlement of a political question in this House.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to Mr. Consul O'Neil's Report on the Fruit Candying Industry of Leghorn, just issued, from which it appears that this industry is mainly supported by the large drawback given by the Italian Government on the sugar employed; that in spite of this drawback, the exports of candied fruits from Leghorn to the United Kingdom have steadily decreased; and that owing to the low price of sugar in England, increasing quantities of fruit in brine have been imported into the United Kingdom to be converted into candied peel in this country; and whether, having regard to the importance to further developing this new home industry, he will terminate the uncertainty as to the future price of sugar by withdrawing the Sugar Convention Bill?

BARON H. DE WORMS: I have seen the Consular Report in question. As the abolition of bounties, and the consequent increase of our Colonial production, must tend to lower and not raise the price of sugar, I cannot admit the accuracy of the conclusion which is drawn by the hon. Member. He appears, moreover, to be unaware that Italy, having unreservedly joined the Convention, will be unable to give any drawback of the nature of a bounty; and if, as is stated in the Consular Report, the Italian industry is mainly supported by the large drawback, the abolition of this bounty must benefit, and not injure, our native industry.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether official information has been received that there is any hostile feeling to the Sugar Convention on the part of the French Government.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No such information has been received.

THE VIVISECTION DEBATE.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Report of Supply, 29th April, will be taken to-night; and, if not, whether he will now name a definite day for its resumption?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: There are many measures of such importance still to be dealt with that I am unable to name a day for the Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Report of Supply, 29th April; but as soon as the state of business permits, I hope to be able to specify a date for the debate.

IRISH BANKRUPTCY LAW.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the fact that workmen in Ireland were included in the benefits obtained by workmen in England and Scotland, under the Preferential Payments in Bankruptcy Act, 1888, as it left this House, but were excluded by an Amend-

ment carried in the House of Lords at the instance of a Member of the Government, he will consider the advisability of introducing a Bill to remedy the inequality thus created?

MR. MADDEN: The Government will introduce a Bill during the present Session for the purpose of assimilating the Law of Ireland to that of England and Scotland as regards preferential payments in bankruptcy, in the expectation that such a Bill may be accepted without opposition. The Amendment to which the question refers was made because the entire framework of the Bill of last Session was found to be inapplicable to Irish Bankruptcy Law, and it was considered advisable to introduce a separate measure dealing with the Irish Law of Bankruptcy.

MINING ROYALTIES COMMISSION.

MR. RANDELL (Glamorgan, Gower): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the great extent and varied character of the minerals of Wales, and to the peculiar conditions under which they are worked, he can give some assurance that the Royal Commission on Mining Royalties will include a due proportion of Commissioners having an intimate and practical knowledge of the mining industries of the Principality?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes, Sir; regard will be had, in constituting the Commission, to the extent and character of the mining industries in the Principality of Wales.

VAGRANT WARDS.

MR. JOHN TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it is a fact that in several unions of the Metropolis no provision is made for the casual poor by means of vagrant wards; whether the Chelsea Board of Guardians have recently declined to provide accommodation of this kind; and, whether, looking to the present unsatisfactory condition of this question, he is prepared to recommend legislation upon it?

*MR. RITCHIE: It is the case that there are several unions in the Metropolis in which no provision has been made for the casual poor by means of vagrant wards. The Local Government Board have been urging that vagrant wards should be provided by the Chelsea Board of Guardians, and I am informed that the Guardians have determined to defer the consideration of the subject for a period of three months. The whole question is receiving the careful consideration of the Local Government Board.

IRELAND—TULLAMORE PRISON.

MR. HENRY J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that one of the cells in Tullamore Prison, which is used by the warders on night duty, is specially heated by a stove, in addition to the warming appliances common to all the cells; and why it is needful for the warder to have a higher temperature than the prisoners?

MR. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that a cell has been set apart for use as a guardroom by the warder who patrols the prison at night, and that in addition to the ordinary heating pipes it is furnished with a small stove. The stove is not for the purpose of heating the cell, but for the preparation of the warder's food, he being on duty all night. The Medical Officer of this prison reports that all the cells are sufficiently heated and a proper temperature maintained.

THE SALVATION ARMY.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is true that five members of the Salvation Army were, on Saturday, 4th May, taken handcuffed through Dorking for conveyance to Wandsworth Gaol; and, whether this treatment was due to any violence on the part of these men; and, if not, what grounds the police had for recourse to this mode of conveyance?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir I am informed by the Chief Constable; that these prisoners were handcuffed. The Superintendent, in the exercise of his discretion, considered it necessary to do so, because there were five prisoners, and on account of the excitement which prevailed in the streets, where a considerable crowd had assembled. I propose to call the attention of the Chief Constable to the practice which has always been recommended by the Home Office,

and which I have stated on more than one occasion in this House—namely, that handcuffing should only be resorted to where there is reasonable ground to suppose that either violence may be resorted to or an escape attempted.

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury what will be course of business next week?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I stated last week the general course that will be pursued with regard to the conduct of public business. The Government will proceed, as I have already indicated, with the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill and the Naval Defence Bill until they are completed before all other business. They will also take Supply. But as soon as the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, the National Debt Bill, and the Naval Defence Bill are disposed of, we shall take up the Local Government measures for Scotland, and proceed with them as far as we are able from day to day.

MOTIONS.

AUGMENTATION OF BENEFICES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Attorney General, Bill to amend "The Lord Chancellor's Augmentation Act," of 1863, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Solicitor General, and Mr. Jackson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 231.]

PERPETUAL PENSIONS.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to move

"That this House dissents from so much of the proposals of the First Lord and Chancellor of the Exchequer, contained in the Treasury Minute of July 20, 1888, relating to perpetual pensions, as propose 'that holders of pensions, allowances, or payments which the law officers of the Crown consider to be permanent in character, but to which no obligations of an onerous kind attaches, should be invited to commute such pensions, allowances, or payments on the same terms as have been accepted in the numerous cases already commuted;' and this House approves the Report of the Select Committee on Perpetual Pensions, 'that the rate of commutation usually adopted, of about 27 years' purchase, is too high.'"

In view, Sir, of what I understand to be the general wish of the House, that an early Division should take place upon the Motion, I do not intend to cumber the discussion with matters of personal detail of the pensions which can be found by all hon. Members in the Report of the Select Committee—in the evidence, as well as in the appendices to the Report. I shall only take the distinction made by that Report, namely, that there are some pensions, not many, granted for services rendered, and a great many ranking under circumstances difficult to justify at any time, and almost impossible to justify with the feelings at present prevalent in the House. I hope it will not be necessary to treat the subject as a Party question, although the Government may feel bound to defend a Minute for which, as it is I presume the work of the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, is nominally responsible. At no time has the agitation on the question been of a Party character, and the vote to be taken will not, I hope, be made by the Government one of mere Party allegiance. When I had the honour to bring this Motion before the House—very imperfectly—in the short Autumn Session of 1881, I presented a number of petitions, an enormous proportion of the signatures to which were those of Conservatives. Now to-night I am merely asking the House to stand by the decision of its own Committee—a decision not arrived at by a Party or majority vote, but with absolute unanimity and with the consent of Her Majesty's Attorney-General, who represented the Government very effectively upon that Committee. The constitution of the Committee shows ten supporters of the Government, and seven Members of the Opposition, and I think that without exceedingly strong grounds—grounds which I have never yet heard alleged—that it will be almost too much to imagine that the House will repudiate the decision of the Committee, which has been practically endorsed by the House itself, in a Resolution of March 23, 1888. I hope that the House will on this occasion, as it usually does, support Committees which have been at great pains to examine into grave matters, involving much detail, and that it will not hastily and lightly dismiss from its attention a judgment arrived at after full consideration, after many sittings, and with the absolute and active concurrence of the Attorney General and

nine supporters of the Government. The Resolution arrived at by the Committee was to the effect that steps should be taken forthwith to determine hereditary pensions and allowances with due regard to the just claims of the respective recipients, and to economy in the public service. In consequence of that Resolution the Minute with which I disagree was laid on the Table of the House on July 20 last, and 20 days had to elapse before it could come into force. As the Minute, however, was in print during only the last three days of the interval, it was impossible to challenge it at the time. A day for its discussion was promised in the adjourned Session last year, but the promise could not be fulfilled, and therefore, though nearly a year has elapsed since the Minute was first laid on the Table of the House, the delay in challenging it has not been due to any fault of mine. This opportunity is now given me, in accordance with the terms of the letter sent me by the First Lord of the Treasury, specifically promising an early day this Session. In the Minute the Government agree that pensions, allowances, and payments ought not in future to be granted in perpetuity; that offices with salaries and without duties, or with merely nominal duties, ought to be abolished, and that the existence of all perpetual pensions, allowances, and payments should be determined and abolished. The Government having agreed to that last Declaration are hardly dealing fairly with the House if they propose to give all pensioners, in abolishing their pensions, a sum which would realize to them for ever an amount nearly equal to the pension. I see the Chancellor does not agree with me, but I am going to quarrel with his arithmetic, if the House will bear with me.

*MR. GOSCHEN: We do not propose to give in each and every case any particular sum.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I am delighted to hear that, but if there is to be a distinction between cases it is a pity the Government have not said so before. The Government say most accurately that it is not in their power to bind their successors, and I am glad of the admission, because it has weight in reference to a later statement in the Minute to the effect that the present Parliament and Government are bound by the Acts of previous Parliaments and Governments. If the former Declaration be true, there can be no force in the latter one. I would urge as a principle that no Parliament has the right to bind for ever all future Parliaments in relation to payments which may come to be considered as disastrous, fraudulent, and demoralizing. The Government state:

"The remaining payments and pensions due to individuals are 16 in number, involving a yearly cost of nearly £12,000, while further annuities, amounting to between £23,000 and £24,000 a year, are mainly payable to bodies and corporations."

I do not know whether the word "mainly" was used accidentally or designedly, or whether it was used to cover the fact that there are other individuals not included in the 16 and other pensions not included in the £12,000. There are 25 in number, and I will read them to the House. It is just I should say the Secretary to the Treasury has laid on the Table to-day a Paper in reference to this subject. In the Paper there is a statement there are only 16 individuals receiving pensions. Let me read my list to the House. It is one which Members can check for themselves from the appendices to the Report of the Select Committee:

"(1) Viscount Exmouth, £2,000; (2) Earl Nelson, £5,000; (3) Lord Rodney, £2,000; (4) Duke of Grafton, officer of the Pipe, £62 9s. 8d.; (5) Sir Edward Hulse, £10 4s. 6d.; (6) Heirs of T. Warren, £12 7s. 2d.; (7) F. J. Prescott, £26 15s.; (8) E. Wadham, £9; (9) Duke of St. Albans, £965; (10) Earl Dysart, £75 10s.; (11) Lord Dauverquerque, £375 16s.; (12) Marquis of Devonshire, £216 3s. 4d.; (13) Marquis of Devonshire, £13 18s. 4d.; (14) Duchess of Lancaster, £803; (15) Duke of Cornwall, £16,216 16s.; (16) Sir Patrick Walker's heirs, £242 15s.; (17) Duke of Hamilton, £45 10s.; (18) Mary Pendrell and Richard Pendrell's heirs, £100; (19) William Pendrell's heirs, £100; (20) Jno. Pendrell's heirs, 100 marks; (21) Humphrey Pendrell's heirs, 100 marks; (22) George Pendrell's heirs, 100 marks; (23) Elizabeth Yates' heirs, £50; (24) Duke of Grafton, £6,870; (25) Duke of Richmond, £19,000."

I, therefore, make the number of individuals 25, and the amount a few thousands more than £12,000.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Will the hon. Gentleman refer to the particulars of the grants to the Duke of Richmond and Duke of Grafton?

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I can quite understand why the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been misled by his

advisers as to these particular pensions. It is the fashion to say that the pensions of the Duke of Grafton and of the Duke of Richmond has been commuted. Neither of them has has been commuted. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER signified dissent.] I see the Chancellor of the Exchequer disagrees with that, but as I have given at least 16 years to the study of this question, and had the opportunity of considering it while Parliament allowed me to do nothing else, the Chancellor of the Exchequer will perhaps allow me to state my own view of it, especially as it is fully corroborated. What was done in the cases of the pensions of the Duke of Grafton and of the Duke of Richmond? The Duke of Richmond was the son of one of our kings, who would not in ordinary law have been entitled to any kind of maintenance. He was, however, provided for by his father out of the coal industry of this country by 1s. per cauldon upon coal, a charge which operated as a curse on the Tyneside industry for fully a century and a quarter, and which at the end of the last century was turned into a cash payment of £19,000, to secure the due payment of which—perhaps to protect it from irreverent hands, like those of Joseph Hume, or from worse ones, like those of myself—a sum of money was invested in Consols. The money was not given to the Duke of Richmond, but kept as the property of the nation with the First Lord of the Treasury for the time being, always one of the trustees. It is true that with the consent of the House the bulk of the sum of £633,000 so invested has since been invested in land, every farthing of surplus on which beyond the £19,000 per annum belongs to the nation. It is true that until the Committee sat there was great doubt whether a large amount of this land had not been dealt with as if the nation had little or only a remote right to it. But each parcel of this land is scheduled in the Report, and I cannot understand why the Chancellor of the Exchequer leaves it out, because, if I am well informed, this land is worth more than £19,000 a year; it has often brought in more since it was bought; and therefore I wonder that the acute mind of the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not looked after this surplus also. I mention this to show the absolute carelessness of the Treasury in dealing with matters of such importance. The case of the Duke of Grafton, as to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer also asks for information, is a case of similar provision made by the same king for another of his sons, but by another of his wives, I do not mean by the Queen. This was only one of several provisions. I know nothing more monstrous than the story of the Grafton pensions, some of which have been commuted and are now outside the reach of Parliament, but which within the last 40 years have brought to the dukedom of Grafton enormous sums out of the taxpayers' pocket for services, if they could be called so, against which all the morality of this nation would revolt if the persons had happened to be the poor, and wretched, and miserable. All the pensions of the Duke of Grafton save three had been commuted before 1881. Large as has been the income of the Duke of Richmond, it has been a trifle compared with the pensions poured into the pockets of the Grafton family. Every member of the first Earl of Grafton's family was pensioned and the pensions reverted on the decease of the original pensioner to the Earl. The pension of the lady whose services originated the pensions with which I am now dealing was fixed for life, with reversion to the Earl of Grafton, who afterwards was Duke of Grafton. In the case of the Grafton money a sum of £30,000 still stands in the Consolidated Stock, but in the case of the Duke of Richmond there is only £80 odd standing there—possibly left there to keep the account open—the rest of the money having been put in land. I have only given these particulars in answer to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Now, the Government go on to state their disagreements. The Committee recommended that in all commutations of existing pensions and allowances the Lords of the Treasury should take into consideration the causes of such pensions, whether or not any real service had been rendered by the original grantee, or is now performed, and I understand the Treasury, as represented by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Lord of the Treasury, say they will do nothing of the kind. Their reasons astonish me.

They say they are not prepared to commit themselves to a pledge which may bring the public faith in question, and they make their case strong by referring to the report of the Select Committee which was appointed by Mr. Spring Rice in 1837. They say they are now going to do what the Committee did in 1838, and they add, "The Committee, it is true, recommended that a few pensions should lapse or be modified." That is rather an astounding presentation of what that Committee did. There was a Committee which the right hon. Gentlemen do not allude to, which sat prior to 1838, but which is referred to in the report of the Committee of 1838. That Select Committee in 1830 reduced the pensions, which amounted to £145,750 per annum, to £75,000. Was there a breach of faith in that, or did they do the duty this House should always do—stop improvident payments by whoever made? What did the Committee of 1838, on which the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Lord rely, do? The Committee said it did not appear to them rash or unjust, but, on the contrary, strictly their duty to inquire into the causes which originally produced and justified the grant, and to find out whether they still existed; and they further said they endeavoured to decide whether each separate grant could be either objected to or defended. The very thing the Treasury to-day say they would not do, and which they said they would not on the authority of the Committee of 1838. As I have said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Lord of the Treasury say the Committee recommended that a few pensions should lapse or be modified. I find that the Committee instituted such a searching inquiry, that 21 pensioners resigned their pensions rather than face the inquiry. They absolutely suspended eight pensions. With reference to six pensions, they lessened the amounts paid and shortened the time for which they were to be paid; while with respect to 14 pensions, they reported that they did not consider it expedient that any of them should be continued. Parliament endorsed what the Committee did, and this is what the Treasury calls recommending that a few pensions should lapse or be modified! I do not want the Government to get rid of 21 pensions, or even to suspend eight, or thus deal with six or 14; all I ask is, that the House having determined they should be abolished, and a Committee of the House having unanimously voted that 27 years' purchase is too high, and that they should not give to any pensioner who has rendered no service at any time an amount which is equivalent, or nearly equivalent, to a perpetuation of the pension, the Government should act accordingly. This is no Party question. Conservatives as well as Liberals have pledged themselves upon it. The Committee has dealt with the question in no rough spirit. The Attorney General, representing the Government, has carefully gone through every line of the Report, and in these circumstances it is too much for the Government to come forward and say they intend to fly in the face of the constant declarations of the representatives of the nation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, indeed, suggests, and suggests truly, in the Paper which has just been laid on the Table, that even at 27 years' purchase there will be an effective saving to the nation of, roughly, something like £9,000 a year. I admit at once that that is better than nothing. But that leaves the Richmond and the Grafton pensions entirely out of the question; because under no circumstances can they be dealt with as part of the scheme on which the House is to pronounce an opinion to-night. I have never denied that a commutation is a saving. I am glad 330 pensions have been commuted since I commenced my attack upon them; because I know that involves a considerable saving to the nation, but I say that now you have a solemn judgment of the Committee; you have deputed a Committee to examine whether or not the rate of 27 years is too much, and that Committee has reported that it is, and it is no answer to say, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer says, that because the conversion scheme was carried last year therefore we are to go back. Whether the people put their money into the Funds or anywhere else is no affair of mine, but of these pensions not one-fourth should be given at all; and, in fact, it is a shame to the House that it has suffered them to be paid so long. It is not a sufficient answer to say that a saving comes to the nation at 27 years' purchase, for the Committee

knew that. In the Minute to which I am objecting, the Government say that they cannot agree that the terms given to individuals are too high, and they do not agree because some saving comes to to the nation in commutation. It will not do, because some nobleman or gentleman, or some person high in influence, may feel dissatisfied, to go back on the decision of the Committee and undo all they have done. The plea put forward in the Minute that it would be a breach of faith cannot be maintained for a moment, except in the cases of pensions for which services may have been rendered, and if there are such, I do not want to put on the Government any excess of strictness. But, I understand the Committee have said, in effect, that 260 years, 240, or 200 years ago pensions were put upon the taxpayers that ought never to have been so put, for causes that cannot ever be plainly stated in the House of Commons without provoking immediate reprobation, and without seeming to make a grossly personal attack. But if persons do not wish to inherit the blame they should not wish to inherit the profit. Although I fear I have already trespassed too long on the indulgence of the House, there is still one point I must answer. I do not often endeavour to ascertain the feeling of hon. Members on the other side as to any proposition I intend to submit to the House, for I think it is hardly fair to do so. But one of the most intelligent Members of the Party opposite said "I agree with you in principle, but it is a small matter." But I say nothing is too small to be honest upon, and if you require honesty from the people, you must be honest towards them in all matters, whether they affect £10,000 or £10. I ask the House to affirm the principle, and I confidently ask the House not to go back upon the unanimous decision of the Committee.

Motion made and question proposed,

"That this House dissents from so much of the proposals of the First Lord and Chancellor of the Exchequer contained in the Treasury Minute of 20th July, 1888, relating to Perpetual Pensions, as propose 'that holders of pensions, allowances, or payments, which the Law Officers of the Crown consider to be permanent in character, but to which no obligation of an onerous kind attaches, should be invited to commute such pensions, allowances, or payments on the same terms as have been accepted in the numerous cases already commuted'; and this House approves the Report of the Select Committee on Perpetual Pensions, 'that the rate of commutation usually adopted of about 27 years' purchase is too high.'"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I wish to second the Motion of the hon. Member. After all, it is not so radical a proposal; it is simply to support the unanimous recommendations of a strong Committee, with a large Conservative element upon it, which reported two years ago on this subject. Now, between the Treasury and the Committee there are three clear points at issue—that is to say, if the Government have not at the last moment changed their minds, for I gather from a remark that fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that in future distinctions are to be drawn between the different classes of pensions, but so far as I read what has happened in the past, and as I read the Treasury Minutes, no distinction is drawn between the very best and the very worst class of perpetual pensions. The first point at issue between the Treasury Minute and the decision of the Committee is, is the system under which perpetual pensions are to come to an end to be based on a fair compromise, in which full justice is done to just claims and to both parties, the payer and the recipient of the pension, or is it to be a mere sham abolition, a mere smuggling away of perpetual pensions into the dark, to come back again with almost exactly the same amount of income to the recipient, and with none of the disadvantages of that criticism that falls upon them at present, and without the risk which certainly would befall them of being abolished before long? Again, is a distinction to be drawn between pensions granted for distinguished services rendered to the nation, and those which are not awarded for public honour, but for private dishonour? To put it plainly, are we to endorse the principle that the descendants of our national heroes and the progeny of Royal Mistresses have exactly the same claims upon the nation? Then again, are we to adopt the same system of commutation towards pensions to which work is attached as towards those for which no service is rendered? There is little need to draw a distinction here, for, unfortunately, the

instances are few to which any work is now attached, if there was any to start with. But the very worst of these pensions have been commuted upon exactly the same principle as the best. If a man has worked 365 days in the year, I doubt whether any better terms would be given to him than to a sinecurist. The Government speak of the principle followed by their predecessors. For anything in the Minute the sinecurists are to have the preference; at best the Nelsons and the Nell Gwynnes are to have the same pay. It was proposed to give 27 years' purchase. That is about as much as a man would get for his freehold. Indeed, in these days a great many would be glad to sell a farm for 27 years' purchase. I am told by an hon. Member near me—I do not know it personally—that the rate of the Tithe commutation is 25 years' purchase, and I am told that in a Bill that is to be introduced the rate is to be 22 years' purchase. It is perfectly monstrous that all these pensions should be commuted at 27 years. I entirely agree with the hon. Member opposite, that if the figures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer are worked out the only losers would be the nation. If these men can get only 4 per cent on their money at mortgage, they will get a higher remuneration in the future than they have had in the past. There is another consideration that will weigh with us. Think of the inconveniences that attach to some of the holders of these pensions, the records of family shame. It is something, I think, to get rid of the certain wish that future Parliaments may deal with this class of pensions in a very drastic manner. They surrender nothing; but if I understand the evidence before the Committee, we surrender a good deal. In this 27 years' purchase the rights of the nation are positively neglected altogether, and the reversion, when the heirs male and heirs general die out, has never been taken into consideration. Whether heirs, male or general, or assigns, all have exactly the same perpetual pension. With this commutation these persons acquire greater respectability, greater security, and at least as much cash as before. Twenty-seven years' purchase would be a good price even for the Nelson pension. Though I am always for rewarding handsomely those who have done good service for the nation, it is a very different thing to pay exactly the same amount to holders of these pensions and to the descendants of those fair ladies I have mentioned. There are many cases in which these pensions have passed from the family into the hands of speculating Jews, and while we, forsooth, think we we are treating descendants of our heroes generously, some speculating Jew has bought up the pension at a bargain and is laughing in his sleeve at the good profit he is making out of the transaction. Also I want to know—I may be wrong in this—when the Treasury Minute speaks so distinctly as it does of not doing injustice to the descendants and present holders of pensions, are we going to pay off to the present holder, having regard to the fact that the whole of the money will pass into the hands of the present possessor, ignoring the claims of the successor? If it is assumed that the successor has no claim, then it is monstrous that we should be called upon to pay a claim which on the other hand we deny. I do hope that in future Parliament will keep a strict eye over this commutation, because I have noticed that the whole of the money paid before was paid in a lump in the month of August, when Parliament was about to rise and it was impossible to ask any questions. What strikes me about the Treasury Minute is that the Treasury have no argument to adduce, but fall back on the records of their predecessors. Yes, they have one argument—that the terms are good, and the grantees have accepted them. The terms hitherto offered by the Treasury have been accepted voluntarily by the payees as if it were simply a question of what these people were ready to take. Is it not a question of what it is right for the Government to give them? If they will not take what is right it is no use for the Treasury to say we have not got the power to force it upon them; let the Treasury come to Parliament and Parliament will undoubtedly give them the power of compelling a fair commutation. Then we are told it has been a gain to the nation. But I do not care whether it has been or not, because it is not a proper principle of commutation. Not only is this 27 years' purchase put on the present generation, but there is

a fair chance that it will be put on future generations also. We are told that in future that would cost only £81 which before cost £100, because we can borrow so cheaply. But we might not always be able to borrow on such favourable terms. We borrow now when our credit is high and gold is high. This is, therefore, the worst time for us and the best for them. Does the Chancellor of the Exchequer suppose that Consols are always going to be at the same rate as now? I have investigated the price of Consols for 100 years up to the year 1823 and I find that they never reached this figure of 81 at which these pensions are being commuted. They varied between 50 and 79. Even as things are, on what terms are we able to pay them so favourably? By pledging the credit of the nation. Whereas in the past we gave these pensioners our cash, we are now giving them our credit. We have no right to pledge our credit in this way. There are many deserving institutions which would be only too glad to borrow money at 3½ per cent. Why are these pensioners to borrow at such a rate? The Chancellor of the Exchequer says that in future there are to be broad distinctions, but those are not the words of the Treasury Minute. The sole question is whether these pensions are for practical purposes likely to be permanent, and for practical purposes we must suppose they will be. If the Treasury had supported this Minute by any arguments, I would give my respectful attention, and even in the absence of argument if I felt that this Minute really represented the candid opinion of the First Lord and the Chancellor of the Exchequer then I would give my respectful attention. But I do not believe anything of the sort. I believe if the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord was a private Member he would be willing to support this Motion. I believe the fact is that it is not with these flesh and blood Lords of the Treasury we have to deal, but with a dry abstraction, the Treasury, as represented by the permanent officials, who remain while Ministers come and go. It is all very well for the political chief of the Department to get up and take part in Party squabbles, but when it is a mere question of administration then there is practically no difference between the one First Bench and the other; but I say these questions of administration are often of far more importance than mere results of our manufactured Party squabbles. So I say, what was done in 1880-86 ought not to bind the House now, and at any rate has no claim upon me. I do not argue on mere generalities or on the rights of property and public faith, good and reasonable as the doctrines may be, they are not entitled to much consideration now. I doubt whether the friends of the rights of property serve that cause by this indiscriminate tying of good and bad together. I am no lawyer, but I understand that there is no such thing as a perpetual entail. Why then should these persons be entailed on the nation for ever? In these days of steam, machinery, and new inventions, when everything is changing, suppose a workman has his occupation taken away from him, does he set up a claim for payment though his employment is gone because his position was to have been permanent? Some of these pensions were given for immoral considerations, and the holders of them have no more right to compensation than workmen have whose livelihood is taken away by new machinery. I do not believe that Charles II. ever intended that the office of Hereditary Falconer should last for ever; he simply meant that so long as the sport of falconry required the office, so long should the Duke of St. Albans hold the office, not that the office should remain long after falconry disappeared. If the Duke of St. Albans, is so anxious to stick to his bargain, let the doctrine of *cy près* be applied. The country is paying the salaries of several head keepers of Windsor Forest. Let the Duke of St. Albans take some such position, the nearest to the office held by his predecessors. I pass from vague commonplaces about rights of property and public faith. Land is supposed to be the best form of property—("No, no.")—No; pensions pay best now certainly. But land is allowed to be one of the best forms of property, and it has been dealt with by legislation in Ireland. Why should Irish landlords with a Parliamentary title be obliged to accept 17 years' purchase while, the descendant of Barbara Villiers receives 27? Many of us have had occasion to protest against schemes of the Charity Commissioners in dealing with funds left for the benefit

of the poor, and we have been met with the reply that it is demanded as a matter of public policy. Is public policy then to guide action in regard to endowments for the poor, but our action in regard to these pensions to be governed by the strict letter of hard dry law? Why should more favour be shown to these pensioners than is shown by the Charity Commissioners to the wishes of the pious testator? Are we to be told that the policy of the Charity Commissioners is not a Tory policy? When two out of four of the Commissioners are relatives of the Prime Minister, I think it may be taken as a fairly Conservative body. The Treasury use language borrowed from the Report of a Committee of 50 years ago, but that Committee discriminated between titles and persons, abolishing some and shortening others. We say there should be the clearest distinction between annual pensions granted during the life of a Sovereign and those settled by Act of Parliament, though an Act of Parliament does not necessarily bind the country for ever and ever. Do we not see in the case of copyists engaged in the Civil Service how, though men are engaged year after year for long terms of years, yet the Treasury have steadily refused to allow the claims of this class to come on the establishment and have pensions? I think it is rather unjust for the Government to treat their own Committee in the fashion they have. The Committee could not be accused of want of respect for the rights of property, as it included landowners, financiers and lawyers, including the Attorney General himself, and was unanimous in its conclusions, seven Conservatives and four Liberals being all on one side. You throw over the opinion of your own Committee, and are not prepared to follow the advice of your own Attorney General. Well, that seems to me rather a back-handed compliment to the Attorney General. It looks very much like saying, "Oh, no; don't you rush into the realm of statesmanship; it is no use raising a question of policy; we tie you down to the strict letter of the law, and on that, and that only, is your advice worth anything at all." But they have let us into the secret—because, though they have been speaking of the law, and have based this not upon policy, but upon law, the highest legal authorities have not been consulted at all. The Solicitor General has not been consulted. They have only consulted the Solicitor to the Treasury on the large question of how these pensions are to be commuted; and we have had some experience of the Solicitor to the Treasury. We know perfectly well that a great many lawyers have had no experience whatever of the law, and from the Solicitor to the Treasury we have lately had a Report issued which shows pretty clearly what is the value of the work that issues from his Department. I want now to deal with one special pension, and one only. The Chancellor of the Exchequer tells us that he is going to discriminate between pensions in the future.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: I did not use those words.

Mr. HANBURY: Then we can go back to the Treasury Minute. I take the worst possible case, and I will ask the Treasury if they are going to commute that, as they have commuted others similar to it, at twenty-seven years' purchase? The worst case is that of the pension granted to the Duke of St. Albans, as Hereditary Grand Falconer, his ancestor, in the reign of Charles II., having received the grant of a salary of £391, with allowances for four falconers at £200 a year, £600 for the purchase of hawks, and £182 for hawks' food, making altogether £1,373. These sums, however, were cut down to £965 in 1838. That seems to show that the Government in the old days did not scruple to dock these pensions, and we only suggest that they should be docked a little more now. What are the Treasury going to do with this pension? One would suppose that if there was one pension that ought to have been treated as an outrageous pension for which no sort of defence was to be made it was this. One would have thought that in past years and even since I myself raised this question the Treasury should not have continued what has been taking place ever since these hawks were done away with. I think that for the past thirty years there has not been a hawk purchased, or a keeper of a hawk employed, or food for hawks obtained; yet the Duke of St. Albans has not only been receiving his salary as Hereditary Grand Falconer, but has been pocketing the pay of four

Falconers whom he has never employed, £600 for hawks which he has never bought, and £182 for hawks' food that has never existed. The same measure which this man metes out to other people ought to be meted out to him. The other day I had a letter from the Master of the Falconry Club, which shows clearly that if we treated the Hereditary Grand Falconer as he treats his pensioners we should have very little to pay to the Duke of St. Albans in the future. Up to about 12 years ago, although he was pocketing £800 out of this £1,000, the Duke of St. Albans was paying £200 a year to a man named Pell. That man, was a good and honest servant, was dismissed from his office, and was only allowed a pension of £50 a year. The poor man was almost in bankruptcy, and the members of the Falconry Club had to get up a subscription to maintain him. How would the Duke of St. Albans like to be maintained by voluntary subscriptions, I should like to know? How are the Treasury going to deal with this case? Not only ought the Duke to receive no more than his salary in the future, but he ought to be made to repay these other sums which he has been receiving for at least 30 years. But is that what is going to be done? Nothing of the sort. It is not intended to treat this as a matter of salary, for then the Duke of St. Albans would only get £391, and would have to refund the rest; but, according to Sir Reginald Welby, it is intended to treat it as an allowance. But how far is the allowance to extend —is it to cover the whole of this money? I will give the evidence not only of the statement appended to the Report of the Committee itself, but of Sir Reginald Welby. The Treasury say in their own appendix—

"It is imperative to continue these payments. The heirs having the fullest guarantee of the country, have such an interest in the salaries granted as to make it imperative on the Lords of the Treasury to make provision for continuing the annual payment."

The hon. Member for Stockport asked Sir Reginald Welby, when he was giving his evidence, "This sum of money, do I understand, is to be paid for ever and ever so far as you know?" and the answer was, "So far as we know. I think my recollection is right that the Treasury have been advised that the Duke of St. Albans is entitled to these sums. My recollection is that the opinion applied to the whole of them." I shall be anxious to see when the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer rises how he will deal with this particular pension. But I have supported the Motion before the House, not because of any one particular pension, but because I object to the whole system on which the pensions are granted. Do not let us suppose that these hereditary pensions will not be able to take another form. We shall have to guard against this system in the future just as now we are trying to kill it in the present. There are honorary colonelcies still to be had which bring in large salaries and represent no work, and also plenty of paid commissions which are the happy hunting grounds of the friends of Ministers. Do not let us suppose that because the courteous King Charles has gone we shall not find obsequious partizans who will be just as ready to toady and find no fault with a powerful Minister who has patronage in his hands. Publicity in all these matters is the only remedy. We must educate the people to watch these things and teach the dispensers of patronage that patronage is a public trust, and not a private perquisite; and we have got to teach the favourites and recipients of these posts that if competent men are put into them they shall not be sinecures, but shall have definite work assigned to them and that where there is definite work there is definite responsibility.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The House has heard from your lips, Sir, the Motion which is before it and it will have been able to judge to a certain extent how far the observations which have been made by the two hon. Members who have spoken are essentially relevant to the Motion, and how far that Motion would carry us. I think I shall be able to prove that the Motion, if adopted, would commit the House to a course which would not be agreeable to the sentiments of the majority on either side. It is, I think, scarcely necessary to deny the insinuation that since the Minute was issued pressure has been brought to bear on the Government by persons in high places or by the recipients of pensions. I can go further and say that I have not received

a single letter of remonstrance from any of those who are in receipt of pensions, and there has, in fact, been no kind of pressure. Again, it has been suggested that the Minute is not really the Minute of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but that it is the Minute of the permanent Department. That, again, is not the case. The Minute embodies the views of the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The hon. Member who has just sat down, and who is rather fond of imputing motives suggested that it was for some political purpose that we drew up the Minute and submitted it to the House.

MR. HANBURY: What I complained of was, that in all these administrative questions too often the officials of both Parties take the same course.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Yes; but the hon. Member also suggested that it could not be the view of the First Lord of the Treasury and myself—it could not be our personal view, but was our administrative view. But my right hon. Friend the First Lord, as far back as the year 1875 expressed the opinion that it was impossible to deprive a man of an income of which he and his family had been possessed for many hundreds of years because its origin was questionable; and that to do so would be equal to disputing the right of ownership to lands of which the deeds might not be in existence although possession had been held for a great number of years. I quote that to show that this is no recent view held by us. I should like the House to consider how far some of the doctrines which have been enunciated to-day might be pushed. The hon. Member for Northampton says that Parliament has the right to annul the decisions of previous Parliaments; and therefore, if one Parliament grants a perpetual pension, another Parliament will not only have the power, but will be equitably entitled to annul it.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: But I added that if the original grant were for service, or for expenditure of money, or relinquishment of land, the duty of Parliament would be to consider the circumstances.

*MR. GOSCHEN: That principle may be carried so far as to declare that because Consols were issued originally to meet an expenditure of which subsequent generations disapprove, therefore it may be treated as an open question how far we should continue to pay the interest. ["No, no."] Yes, and that land which has been granted may be resumed.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Parliament did resume land several times in the reign of William III.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I am glad that the House should see how far the hon. Member is prepared to go. This is not an attack merely on these pensions, but when the hon. Member has completed that part of his task which he is at present engaged on, he will be perfectly prepared to examine the titles to land given for no service whatever, or for bad services, and to question those titles. ["Hear, hear."] Yes, those are the doctrines to which a Motion of this kind leads, and I am glad to see the frank way in which hon. Members admit those doctrines.

MR. HANBURY: I must correct the right hon. Gentleman on this point. I said nothing of the sort. What I said was that I supported the view of the Government's own Committee, to the effect that pensions of this kind should only last during the life of the present holder.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I fail to see how the hon. Member's correction bears upon the point under discussion. I was answering the hon. Member for Northampton, who put forward the view that it is justifiable to look back over centuries in order to examine titles, and to take away property which has been long enjoyed by the present owners and their predecessors, because the original claim to it may have been founded on shame and fraud.

MR. HANBURY: That is the opinion of your own Attorney General.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I shall be surprised if that is the Attorney General's opinion, but if it is, I dissent from it. This is the cardinal point on which the Government differ from the view of the Committee. The Government are of opinion that the titles should only be examined with a view to see whether they do or do not as a matter of fact constitute perpetual pensions, or an annuity given in lieu of some money or land. If that is their nature, the public faith is pledged, and we have no right

to consider ulterior circumstances which do not affect the title of the person benefited. Look at the unjust difference which would arise if you once began to dock perpetual pensions because you did not approve of the reasons for which they were given. One of these men who have rendered service had his pension in land, which has come down to his descendants, or which, perhaps, they have sold; another had his pension in money, and he or his descendants have spent it, and another received it in the form of an annuity, on the faith of Parliament, and the hon. Member says that as in the latter case there is no other title but that of the good faith of Parliament, we are entitled to take the annuity away and cancel the promise given. We say there is no distinction to be drawn between these several cases. As there has been some confusion as to what perpetual pensions are, I have caused to be prepared, and there was submitted this morning, a schedule showing the distinctions that exist. If hon. Members refer to it they will see that there are perpetual pensions, compensations—*i.e.*, annuities—for privileges taken away, and hereditary offices and salaries. These do not all stand on the same footing. As for the case of the Duke of St. Albans, we should not think of compensating him on the same terms as others who have an unquestioned title to a perpetual pension. ["Why?"] Because if hon. Members will examine into the matter they will see that there is the greatest difference between pensions as to the title to which there is no doubt and allowances such as this. The case of the Duke of St. Albans is not one of pension but of an allowance. But if the Government is not allowed to draw any distinctions between cases, I should prefer to pay such allowances as that of the Duke of St. Albans than consent to take away the pensions granted to the descendants of Lord Nelson, Lord Rodney, and Lord Exmouth. Negotiations for the commutation of the Duke of St. Albans' pension were entered into at one time, and if they had resulted in an understanding, 27 years' purchase of the allowance would not have been given. We have been asked how we should deal with such cases as that of the Duke of St. Albans, but I say it is not on all fours with other cases. The argument has been conducted by the hon. Members for Preston and Northampton, and outside the House generally, on the very weakest cases; and anyone who had not inquired into the matter might be led to suppose that the question is one of terminating pensions with nothing but a shameful origin, and of commuting these at 27 years' purchase. But of the genuine perpetual pensions there are not more than seven or eight, and £10,000 out of the £11,000 to which they amount are distributed as follows:—Lord Exmouth, £2,000; Lord Nelson, £5,000; Lord Rodney, £2,000; the Duke of Schomberg, £720; and the Seigneur D'Auverquerque, £375. 16s. When the Committee lay it down that 27 years' purchase is too high they make no exception whatever; and the House, if it adopts the Motion of the hon. Member, will condemn the reservation made on this point by the Treasury Minute, and lay it down as a hard and fast rule, that 27 years' purchase is too high a rate of commutation. It is to be condemned as too high even for those cases which I have quoted, where the original pensioners have rendered the most distinguished services to the country.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: The Treasury Minute proposes 27 years' purchase for all cases, without any exception.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The Government fix 27 years' purchase as the maximum. It has been given, and will be given, in certain cases; but the Treasury never intend to make a clean sweep of all pensions on those terms. The Government cannot accept the Motion before the House for one reason, if for no other—namely, that if 27 years' purchase is condemned as too high, it will be impossible to give the same terms to the descendants of the distinguished persons whom I have enumerated as were given a few years ago to the descendants of others who were far less deserving. But we do not wish to make this 27 years' purchase a cast iron rule to be applied in the commutation of all or any of these pensions. The 27 years we fix as the maximum.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: The Minute states that owners of pensions, allowances and payments which the law officers of the Crown consider to be per-

manent in their character, but as to which no obligation of an onerous kind attaches, shall be invited to commute on the terms accepted in the numerous cases already commuted. Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether there was more than one case of ten years?

*Mr. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member strains the meaning of the document. I do not put the same interpretation upon it as the hon Member. If the hon. Member will refer to the evidence, he will find that it was by no means the case that 27 years was an absolute rule; he will find that there was an investigation of the circumstances of different cases. As to the Master of the Hawks, there is nothing in the words of the Minute to compel the Government to give him 27 years' purchase. It was not in our mind, and I repudiate such a construction; it was not and could not be our intention, because we had already been in negotiation for commuting the allowance for less than 27 years' purchase. The hon. Member argues that the rate of commutation at 27 years is too high; but if the House were to accept his view it would tie the hands of the Government in such a manner that they would be unable to commute any of the remaining pensions upon the same terms as those already commuted. ["No, no."] No doubt there is a body of gentlemen in the House who would prevent the descendants of Lord Nelson—

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): Lord Nelson never had any descendants.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: Well, the family of Lord Nelson from obtaining the full capital value of their annuity. In this case they would simply be taking away part of the grant to Lord Nelson; that is the point. I would be content to take a Division on that point with the greatest confidence. I do not know whether the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) was in his place when the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) suggested that certain commutations were made in August, 1883 and 1884, when they might escape the attention of Parliament. I am confident that there is absolutely no foundation for such a suggestion. Those terms were granted in the time of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, after full examination of the case, and I should be rather surprised were the right hon. Gentleman to say that the terms are now excessive which were not excessive in 1883 and 1884. I protest that there is no desire on the part of the Government to ignore the recommendations of the Committee. They have adopted a portion of those recommendations, and they will follow the spirit of the Committee in this, that there shall be full examination of every title. I am prepared to say, if hon. Members think that these things are done in secret—as the hon. Member for Preston seems to think they were done in the time of our predecessors, though I do not believe him to be right—I am perfectly prepared to say that in each case of proposed commutation a Report shall be made to Parliament, which shall lie for a certain time on the Table of the House, so that Parliament may retain a certain amount of control, and see that the terms granted are not excessive. There has been some exaggeration as to the amount of the pensions. The Government have brought them within manageable compass, but I should regret if in settling them we were to establish any principles which would seem to affect the inviolability of public faith. I accept much of what the Committee has done, but I do not think they examined the particular point as regards the number of years' purchase. At all events, they have not favoured the House in their Report with a single observation on that subject except that they consider 27 years too high. The hon. Member for Northampton asks why the Grafton and the Richmond pensions were not included in the Papers. Because the Papers dealt only with pensions and annuities in regard to which the principle of commutation would and could be applied. The question of the Richmond and Grafton pensions did not come in, although the Government had no wish to disguise the existence of those arrangements. The Papers have been drawn up with a full desire to put the House in possession of all the information. The House must bear in mind that if the terms of commutation are put too low then the holders of the annuities will not come in, and then the House will be in the position of having to apply compulsory expropriation. I think it would be far more desirable if, on reasonable terms which

would commend themselves to the majority of the House, an equitable arrangement could be made without proceeding to such extremities. It would be a dangerous course upon which to enter—the application of compulsory expropriation in the case of these individual pensioners. I trust that what I have said will go far to remove any misapprehension which may have existed in the mind of any hon. Member.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean that the commutation terms should be submitted to the House before the commutation takes place or after it is effected?

*MR. GOSCHEN: What I suggest is that the terms of the commutation should be laid on the Table of the House, and that they should not come into effect until after the lapse of a certain number of days after tabling them, so that the House might have the opportunity of discussing them.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Then in that respect there would be a modification of the Minute as laid on the Table.

*MR. GOSCHEN: It is not necessary to put this in the Minute. It is no modification. It is an offer which I make to the hon. Member. The Government are as anxious as any hon. Member that these pensions should be commuted; but I must protest against any different interpretation being placed on my promise than that which I have myself just given.

MR. GLADSTONE (Mid Lothian): I am not sure of the position in which the House stands. I had supposed that the views of the Treasury had been distinctly and finally declared by the Minute on the Table, and feeling this to be a question of considerable difficulty and delicacy, I had considered it as one of the alternatives before me, the Motion of the hon. Member being the other. Do I understand that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is prepared to lay on the Table of the House another Minute modifying the basis upon which the former Treasury Minute was founded?

*MR. GOSCHEN: No.

MR. GLADSTONE: Then I will not take up the time of the House by discussing what is not really before us. I gather that it is really the Treasury Minute that we have before us and not the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton. Although the sums at issue are limited compared with many questions which are often disposed of in very brief compass, yet the principles surrounding commutation are of the utmost importance. The right hon. Gentleman has appealed to me on the question, which is one of the most sacred of all questions, that of the inviolability of the public faith. The House of Commons cannot make too great sacrifices for the purpose of maintaining that inviolability, and, moreover, I would say that at all times within my experience the House of Commons has never hesitated to make great sacrifices for the purpose of that maintenance. If the House of Commons has been extravagant or gone beyond the bounds of reason, it has undoubtedly been in a sense which was apparently adverse to the public—that is, we have given to the interest of the parties the utmost possible liberality of construction, and in that sense gone against the public, but we have felt that the true interest of the public, the supreme and paramount interest, is in the maintenance of the public faith. Coming to the question how far the public faith is before the House of Commons on the present occasion, I am not sure that I entirely understand what is the doctrine of the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon that subject; but if and in so far as the public faith is at stake, I trust the House of Commons will maintain it, and will not recede from it. Now I may say that I do not consider the public faith to be pledged by the Act of Charles II., and I signify by that observation that in my opinion the power of the Sovereign at that date did not, according to the true sense of the British Constitution and the precedents which ought to have guided public authority, extend to enabling the King to establish a permanent pecuniary charge upon posterity without limit of time. The House has gone wonderfully near the point of affirming the proposition that I have just denied. In the early part of the 17th century very sound doctrines were held upon the subject, and it was determined by the Courts that the Crown could not constitute a public monopoly, but in the time of Charles II. the whole northern region of America, which, if not money, was money's worth, was given to a private incorporation, the Hudson's Bay Company, with a devolution of powers

of government so extreme that the Hudson's Bay Company assumed under them and exercised for five or six generations the power of prohibiting every British subject to set his foot upon the ground in any portion of the vast country included in the charter, and I am sorry to say in the presence of the law officers of the Crown, that there were law officers of the Crown about 40 years ago who gave it as their judgment that that grant was given in perpetuity. In my opinion it was not. That was going very near to the assertion of a perpetual pension. Neither do I consider that the public faith has been pledged in another class of cases which are distinct from those that turn only on the act of the Crown—I mean the cases in which obligations formally settled upon the Civil List were taken over by Parliament and the charge placed on the Consolidated Fund. I do not consider that that simple act pledged what is properly called the faith of the country, and for this reason, that it was not a question of the validity of these grants. The intention of Parliament simply was to settle the question as between the Crown and the Legislature, and the act, fairly interpreted, meant that whatever were the old obligations of the Civil List, those and no others Parliament took over and placed on the Consolidated Fund, reserving their character for future consideration, without in any manner confirming or extending them. I do not altogether agree with the hon. Member for Northampton, to whom we are greatly indebted for his labours in this cause, in the extension he gave to the doctrine of public faith. He has referred to the greatest of all these pensions—the pension enjoyed by the family of the Duke of Richmond. It was conferred not by the Crown, but by Parliament, and the hon. Member says that what one Parliament has enacted another Parliament may repeal. I am not prepared to accept that proposition without limitation. Parliament, for any pecuniary purpose, is the fully authorized representative of the nation, and the nation, it appears to me, must be committed by the deliberate act of its authorized representative, whether the act were in itself wise and just or unwise and unjust. Consequently, it seems to me that wherever it can be shown, as it can be shown, for example, I apprehend, with regard to the pension to the Duke of Richmond, that many things are done under Act of Parliament which are unjust to the country, I am not prepared to say that Parliament is morally entitled—constitutionally, of course, it is—and competent to go back on that declaration and repeal it. With the ideas I have of public faith, I think that where Parliament of its own deliberate act, aware of what it was about, and having the intention clearly before it, has made an arrangement which took the nature of a contract with private parties, whether that arrangement is good or bad for the country, it is the duty of Parliament to adhere to it. The question before the House is not a broad one. I cannot wonder that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Mover and Seconder have touched on matters of great importance contained in the Report of the Committee on which the Treasury and the Committee are at issue. At the same time it is very important the House should observe exactly what are the limitations of the proposal on which we are called to commit ourselves to-night. Now the propositions embodied in the Motion do not dispose of the entire question, but they leave other matters of great importance to be dealt with hereafter by proper and competent authorities. And here I would make a confession for myself. If there be culpability in the simple adoption of the rule of 27 years, I am the person primarily culpable, because in the year 1853, when I was Chancellor of the Exchequer, I advisedly, and, as I thought, in the interests of the public, commuted a pension which I understood and believed to be an honourable pension, on the principle substantially of 27 years' purchase. I did that act as an administrative act, and without the direct authority of Parliament, although of course in the exercise of legal powers. I believe it to be very doubtful whether it was right to have established a precedent of that kind without the authority of Parliament. I had good intentions in the matter. It was a fair, open, and above-board transaction; still, I think there is great force in the view of those who hold that no step ought to be taken in a matter so delicate and difficult as this was without the authority of the House of Commons.

With respect to the simple amount of 27 years' purchase, I am not prepared to say that now I regard that as an individual or an unreasonable amount to be paid in the class of pensions for good and honourable services and of full and unquestioned title. I am sure hon. Members will recognize as strongly as I do the importance of those distinctions—first of all, between an honourable and a shameful pension, and secondly, the question of the perfection of the title, and the importance of the question how far a perfect title may tend to protect even a shameful pension. The case we have before us is the case of a Motion which deals in a naked sense—in the sense of renunciation—with a portion of the Treasury Minute, and deals in a positive sense with one of the declarations of the Committee. I noticed towards the close of the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he said, or appeared to say, that the acceptance of this Motion drove us upon the adoption of compulsory legislation. The question of compulsory legislation is one of very great difficulty, on which at present I will give no opinion one way or the other; but my opinion of compulsory legislation is not prejudged by the Motion before the House. It is reserved intact for future legislation. I feel it to be my duty to vote for the Motion of the hon. Member, I think every one will understand why I vote for that Motion. In the first place it asserts strongly the principle that distinctions ought to be had among pensions according to the various circumstances which affect the title or character of the grant. If that is the only point at issue, I could conceive that the concession of the Chancellor of the Exchequer might open the way to a settlement. Then I come to the further question of 27 years' purchase. I have stated what was my own opinion. I do not adhere to that opinion as a very strong tenacious conviction, but I must say this, that I do attach and make no scruple of stating that I do attach in a point such as this the very highest authority to the unanimous Report of the Committee. The Committee were *primâ facie* the Representatives of the House of Commons. The House and not I or any Minister or individual is the judge of the proper number of years' purchase to be given for pensions. The House of Commons has not yet pronounced. But the Committee has pronounced, and with respect to that I observe these things—first of all, it was a Committee composed impartially from the different parties in the House, and the Conservative element was very largely represented; and that Committee arrived at a unanimous judgment. I do not think I have known a case in which opposition has been offered in a pecuniary matter to the unanimous judgment of a Committee which has made a report in favour of the public interest. I have myself resisted Reports of Parliamentary Committees, and, upon two occasions that are in my mind, successfully resisted them; but then the Committees had reported against the public, and I, on the part of the Government, resisted in the interests of the public. This Committee has reported in the interests of the public. The practice of the Government has been to offer 27 years' purchase. The Committee said, and said unanimously, "27 years' purchase is too much." I am not prepared to resist that. I feel it my duty not to resist. But there is another element in the case, though this is not the occasion for hostile criticism; but I must confess I do not think the Government have quite sufficiently appreciated their own attitude in relation to this question as it has been applied in two circumstances—one is that they have assented to the Committee and allowed the Attorney General to join it, and the other is their assent to the Report. When the Government assented, and I believe willingly assented, to refer a pecuniary question involving the interests of the taxpayer to the consideration of a Committee, and when that Committee was appointed and its Members chosen, not against the will of the Government, not in despite of their views, and when that Committee made a Report in the interest of the public, it seems to me that it is a great responsibility indeed—I may go so far as to say it is a mistake—on the part of the Government to refuse to adopt the Report of that Committee. I could understand their refusing to adopt it if it involved a violation of public faith; but what the Committee reported was really simply this—that the rate of commutation at 27 years' purchase was too high. This Committee disapproves of the adoption

of that rate as a general rule. They mean that they disapprove of it as the maximum. I do not agree with that, but I must say I am not prepared to withold my assent to the Report of a Committee appointed with the free will of the Government, and making a Report in favour of the taxpayer upon matters which cannot after all be regarded as a breach of public faith, or as a question of public policy, but a matter depending on the views which we may separately take of what is reasonable or what is unreasonable. I fully admit that there may be in future other questions—more difficult questions before us to settle. I do not know whether it will be considered necessary to offer a very persistent opposition to the Motion of the hon. Gentleman, but I am not prepared to express a positive opinion, and still less an opinion founded upon the principle that the rate of 27 years' purchase is that which should be adopted in a case of this kind as a maximum; and, above all, I am not prepared to withhold my assent from the deliberate recommendation of the Committee of the House of Commons, appointed as this was, conducted as this was, and unanimous as this was in its Report to the House.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I do not desire to occupy more than two or three minutes in reference to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. I think I understood him to say in the course of his speech that he was prepared to justify the action taken in 1853, and which set the precedent for the course which we are now adopting.

Mr. GLADSTONE: What I said was that it was very doubtful to have created a precedent of that kind without consulting Parliament.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I took the words down, and I thought the right hon. Gentleman said that 27 years' purchase was not too much for a pension in reward of honourable service. But what I wish to point out is this, that the Motion of the hon. member for Northampton entertains the proposal for commutation by payment for good and honourable services and unquestioned title. Reference has been made to the fact that all these pensions have been in existence, but it is only a small section, those of less than a thousand pounds, which bear the character to which reference has been made, and which, I think, remains to be dealt with. All I can tell the House is that my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has entered into an engagement that no pensions, not even those for honourable service, not even those sanctioned by the authority of Act of Parliament, shall be commuted until after the terms of the commutation have been laid upon the table of Parliament for 30 days, so as to give Parliament an opportunity of expressing its opinion upon those terms if it thinks fit to do so. Sir, reference has also been made to the fact that the Report of the Committee was unanimous. That is perfectly true, and, with the single exception of this particular point, the Government have accepted, and intend to adhere to, all the recommendations of the Committee's report. But what, Sir, are the facts of the case? Is there no substantial economy to the public in the commutation of all pensions for good and honourable service, at 27 years' purchase? When this Report of the Committee was adopted, the value of money was considerably higher than it is now. The Committee itself admitted that it took exceedingly little evidence upon the question of value or purchase. As to the original value of the pension, I believe no authority whatever was examined.

*Mr. BRADLAUGH: Sir Reginald Welby stated the practice of the Treasury fairly fully. There was no challenge of any portion of his evidence, and, therefore, there was no necessity to call any other evidence.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: There was no criticism and no evidence whatever as to points based on Act of Parliament. What is the result of the arrangement as carried out? In 1887, the value of money was 3 per cent, so far as the Government is concerned. In 1888 it became 2¾ per cent, and that was a saving of £19 out of every £100. It has now become a saving of £25 15s. out of every £100; and by 1903, when we will pay 2½ per cent, the saving will be 33 per cent. It is said that we are going to pledge the credit of the Government and the country to those persons whose pensions are to be commuted, but we will effect the saving which I have

mentioned. Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian gave almost the strongest reason why the Resolution of the hon. Member for Northampton should not be passed. The Motion binds the hands of the Government so that any commutation at less than 27 years' purchase is not possible. If the persons who are the rightful owners under an Act of Parliament, or under the authority of Parliament, express a desire to commute, the Treasury is not in a position to grant them the capital sum which is necessary, excepting the terms have been considered by Parliament. For my own part I should approach the consideration of a Compulsory Appropriation Bill with very serious misgiving. I think it would be a very injurious step so far as the public interest is concerned, and, irrespective of these pensions, it is one which opens up questions that might very seriously affect the credit of the country.

DR. CLARKE (Caithness): I desire to move an Amendment to the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton in order that there may be a clear and distinct issue before the House, and in order that it may be able to take a Vote upon the proposals of the Committee, and upon the proposals of the Government. And the way in which that can be done would be to add to the Motion the words—"That all perpetual pensions should cease with the lives of the present holders." Sir, it seems to me that what we are now practically asked to do is to make certain pensions perpetual ["Order."] Perhaps some Members who cry "Order" are interested. I think, Sir, this is a very important question, for the country is asked to make pensions perpetual, put the capital cost upon the people of this country of making practically perpetual pensions for certain services rendered. What are some of those services? Say some lady took part in an act of adultery——

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to move that the Question be now put.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Question is that "the Question be now put."

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I wish to ask, Sir, whether, if this Motion is carried, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Caithness can be put?

*MR. SPEAKER: Certainly not; the Amendment has not been moved.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes 359; Noes 96.—(Div. List, No. 114.)

Question put accordingly. The House divided;—Ayes 205; Noes 264.—(Div. List, No. 115.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3.

*MR. BONSOR (Surrey, Wimbledon): I rise on this occasion to move an Amendment, and to take this the first opportunity I have had to renew the protest which I made when the Budget was introduced as to the alteration in the standard on which beer is taxed. That standard was fixed at 1057 in 1880, and it is now proposed in the present Bill to alter it to 1055. I feel, Sir, that this is a disturbance of trade, which is not justifiable, and I hope that if this Bill is carried in its present form, we shall have some assurance from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the standard will be a permanent one, and that we need not anticipate another disturbance in this direction. I should also like to say one or two words on the question of the beer tax, if I may be allowed to do so, in moving this Amendment. There is a general idea abroad that the brewing trade are absolutely objecting to this increase of duty. Sir, that statement is unfounded; the brewing trade have taken exception to the form in which the tax is proposed, and they have also taken exception to the permanent character of the tax, but they have not objected to a tax of a national character for purposes of national defence. Mr. Courtney, I think I need not go into the technical question as to what a quarter of barley produces in the form of beer. That is a question which has once for all been set at rest by the recent deputation of the brewing trade to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The question before us is simply the question of obtaining Revenue. We have no objection to assisting the Chancellor of the Exchequer to build up a Revenue, and to make his balance even, but the brewing trade do feel that they ought not to have imposed on their profits, as a permanent tax, an additional income tax of 6d., for the general purposes of reducing the burdens of other traders, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer admits that this tax is an additional tax for a special purpose. That, Sir, is the complaint of the brewing trade, which I wish to put before the public, and that, Sir, is the contention which I am here to support. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be able to give us an assurance that it is not his absolute intention to impose a permanent tax. The brewing trade feel that they are practically the collectors of the revenue, and they hope that should a surplus, or any large amount of money, come into the Exchequer, that this tax will be considered in future Budget arrangements as an additional, and not as a permanent, tax. In short, I ask that the standard to be fixed should be permanent, and this additional tax temporary. I beg to move the omission of words from the Clause so as to leave the existing standard of specific gravity in beer unchanged.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: I cannot complain of the observations which have fallen from the hon. Member behind me, and I am glad to perceive from his remarks that there is no objection on the part of the great brewers to pay this tax for a special purpose, and that what they object to is the idea that it is to be a permanent tax imposed upon them. Now, let me recall to the recollection of the Committee the arguments which have been advanced against the proposed duty in its present form. A few evenings since I alluded to a controversy between the brewers and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in 1880 and the following years with reference to the standard of gravity, and I pointed out that it was held by the Inland Revenue that owing to the standard having been paid at 1057 instead of 1055, the increased amount which was expected to be derived from the tax had not been realized. On the other hand, the brewers contended that whether that increased amount had been received or not, they had practically paid more per barrel produced than they paid in the days of the Malt Duty. Now, it is almost impossible to arrive at a conclusion as to whether the brewers are right in that argument or not, on account of the difficulty of finding the necessary statistics. I am afraid that this controversy cannot be settled by any appeal to statistics, and I therefore fall back upon the paramount consideration which I used in introducing the Budget, that whether the brewers were right or wrong in their contention as regards 1881, I desired to derive an additional revenue of £300,000 from beer to meet the necessities of this year's Budget. Well, Mr. Courtney, I then believed, and still believe, notwithstanding the contention of my hon. Friend, that 36 gallons of beer at a gravity of 1055 is a more correct equivalent of two bushels of malt than is the same amount at a gravity of 1057. The brewers may be right or they may be wrong in thinking that 6s. 3d. on two bushels of malt is too high a tax, compared with what they used to pay before 1880, but I believe it can be proved to demonstration that, whatever may be the proper duty on two bushels of malt, that duty ought to be charged on 36 gallons at 1055. But I understand my hon. Friend does not wish to raise this point now, but wishes to ascertain whether the addition to the Beer Duty is to be permanent or only temporary. Now it might have been contended that, as the need for this revenue was created by an expenditure which will be completed in seven years, therefore it would have been right to impose the extra duty for seven years only. But I believe the brewing interest prefer to have it as it stands at present rather than to have it imposed for seven years, and I am bound to say I think they are right in their contention. If it were put on for seven years it is clear that they would not have the slightest chance of its being taken off before the end of that time, whereas if it is put on without any stipulated limit of time, the matter may be brought up again whenever it appears to be possible to make a remission of duty. The Government do not at all consider that by the change now made they are stereotyping the rate of duty at its present amount.

I believe we ought to regard the standard of 1055 as permanent, but there is, of course, nothing essentially permanent about the rate of 6s. 3d. I believe that hon. Members on both sides of the House who are interested in the brewing trade are afraid that the additional taxation now imposed upon them for a special purpose may be subsequently utilized in order to secure a reduction in the income tax upon other traders who have not been called upon to make a special contribution to the necessities of the nation in the present Budget. I think there would be force in the argument that it ought not to be used for such a purpose. I am most anxious not to fetter in any way the complete fiscal liberty of the Government, but at the same time, I think beer will have a fair claim for consideration side by side with other great articles of consumption, if there is a satisfactory surplus all round, and if the revenue from beer itself is satisfactory after this duty has been imposed. At the same time, I must not be understood to pledge myself with regard to any remission of taxation in the future, for it would be folly for the Government to tie its hands in regard to any great item of the revenue. I trust hon. Members will understand, however, that as I have said the Government do not look upon the Beer Duty as necessarily fixed at its present rate. Let me add that I am aware of the great interest taken in this matter by the growers of barley; indeed, I think they are, perhaps, more alarmed at the suggested increase of the duty than the brewers themselves. I am persuaded that their alarms are unfounded. I have explained to the Committee on a previous occasion the reasons why the barley growers will, I believe, be entirely unaffected, and I will not repeat them now. At the same time, it is certainly a matter which requires to be watched, because if it were found that barley growing in this country was grievously affected by any increase of the Beer Duty, the matter would be one for the serious consideration of any Chancellor of the Exchequer to whatever Party he might belong.

MR. GLADSTONE: I quite agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that, except within very narrow limits, it is not as a general rule in the power of the Minister of Finance to bind his successors with regard to the expectations he holds out as to the reform or remission of taxation. I do not speak at all with respect to any present circumstances, but say that I take that to be the case as a general rule. In regard to what has transpired, I feel it necessary to say one thing—namely, that there ought to be no relation whatever between the question of standard and the question of the rate of duty. The rate of duty may vary with varying considerations of public policy, but the question of the standard depends upon the relation between beer and malt. It is simply a matter for chemical and scientific knowledge to determine how much beer is represented by a certain quantity of malt, and how much malt is represented by a certain quantity of beer. The relations of beer and malt to one another depend in the smallest degree upon questions of policy, and therefore I may say I cannot regard the alteration of the standard as a proper means of obtaining additional taxation. If it is a true rectification of the standard, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer is in a condition to show, which he may be—I do not say he is not—that I made an error in the concession which I acceded to in 1881 in the alteration of the standard between 1855 and 1857, then by all means let that be set right But I object to treating the matter as if it were equivalent to so much additional revenue; the change ought to be made, if at all, upon its own merits. There was an analogous case in the days when we had a system of sugar refinery carried on in bond. The refiner was required to produce so many pounds of refined sugar from a certain quantity of raw sugar. The figures are immaterial; but let us suppose that a refiner produced 90 lbs. of sugar, he was allowed duty upon 100 lbs. of raw sugar. That was a system very good in itself, and was quite right; but it would have been absurd for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say, "I want more revenue, and therefore I will require the refiner to produce no longer 90 lbs. but 95 lbs. from the same quantity of raw sugar." The relations between raw and refined sugar depend upon the qualities of the article and not upon considerations of policy. I wish it to be understood, however, that what I have said is only a verbal criticism, and that, perhaps, my

right hon. Friend is able to prove that my original proposal was better than the final one. In that case I have no objection to make.

*Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I am very glad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer refuses to give any pledge as to a future reduction of the Beer Duty. All the temperance bodies in the country are very grateful to him for this addition to the Beer Duty. We think beer can very justly bear this additional duty; indeed, we think it might bear a much higher duty. Only the other day we had a debate respecting the Tea Duty, and in that debate it was clearly shown that the incidence of duty upon tea is much greater than that upon beer. I am told that the Beer Duty is only equivalent to ¼d. a pint. I, and many of those with whom I am associated, think that it might very reasonably and properly be doubled. We wish to reduce the consumption of alcoholic liquors as much as possible, and think that the best way to do that is to lay a heavy tax upon them.

Colonel DAWNAY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): It seems to me that the difference between Liberal and Conservative finance is that the Liberals always place increased taxation upon their political opponents and the Conservatives upon their political friends. The result invariably is, that whatever Government is in office, the unfortunate Conservative Party goes to the wall. We were told last Session that one of the results of the Local Government Bill would be a great revision of taxation. We have had certain revisions, but one of the most substantial revisions which was promised was, at the last moment, dashed away from us. We were explicitly told by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Prime Minister that an equivalent would be found for the tax early in the present Session; but, instead of the equivalent being found, it seems that fresh burdens of taxation have been placed upon us. I suppose that other Conservative Members besides myself during the last Autumn Session praised the Chancellor of the Exchequer up to the skies at every horse show and every agricultural dinner for the boons and blessings he was about to shower upon the agriculturists; but all these boons and blessings seem to have disappeared in the dim distance. I do not exactly see how we shall hold up our heads when we are asked in the coming autumn what we are going to get in the place of the van and wheel tax.

Sir G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): Conservative Governments are always exceedingly civil to the brewers—it is their nature to be—and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not been wanting in that civility. But I must add my expression of satisfaction that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not substantially yielded in this matter. I agree with the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) that the duty on beer is not half heavy enough. Apart from the temperance point of view, the taxation of alcohol in beer is inadequate in proportion to that in spirits and other alcoholic stimulants. Alcohol in beer is only taxed to the extent of one-sixth part of the alcohol in whiskey. It seems to me especially unwise and unreasonable that this matter should be treated as a brewers' question. I can understand that something should be said on behalf of the poor man's beer; but this is not a poor man's question—it is a brewers question. Brewers make an enormous profit, and, therefore, I rejoice at this tax upon an enormous monopoly which holds the country in drink and keeps the Conservative Government in power, but which is not founded on reason or right.

Mr. H. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): I was not able to gather from the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it was not his intention to re-impose the Beer Duty next year, but I cannot help thinking he must be very well aware of the great embarrassment caused the agricultural interest by the idea that the tax will be permanent. Between this and the time for the introduction of the next Budget I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will seriously consider whether there are not some other sources from which the money required cannot be more easily and properly obtained.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I certainly intend to give myself the luxury of supporting the Government on this occasion, and I quite agree with my hon. Friends that beer can stand a very much larger charge than it has ever done as yet. Beer imposes very great burdens upon us in the shape

of pauperism and crime, and therefore it ought to bear a large share of the taxation. Besides, the supporters of the Government have voted an increase of naval expenditure, and therefore it is right they should pay for it.

BARON DIMSDALE (Herts, Hitchin): I trust that when the immediate necessity for the beer tax ceases some measure of relief will be afforded, as it was by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian in respect of the malt tax at the close of the Crimean War. I can certainly assure the Chancellor of the Exchequer that in the barley-growing districts this tax has caused an immense amount of irritation, which it will take a good deal to allay.

MR. BONSOR asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

SIR E. BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) who had given notice of the following Amendment:—Clause 3, page 2, line 7, after "eighty-nine," insert "until the sixteenth day of April, one thousand eight hundred and ninety," said: I desire to explain the course I intend to take with reference to the Amendment which stands in my name. In the first place, let me say I adhere to every word I have said on two previous occasions lately on behalf of the barley growers of the Eastern counties. I protested against the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to tax one of the most important products of the land to a greater extent than it is already taxed, and I have had most unmistakeble evidence, since my Amendment appeared on the Paper, of how strong a feeling there is in the country against the proposal. The agricultural interest contend that the barley crop is already most severely taxed in respect to the 6s. 3d. per barrel Beer Duty, and that not the repeal of the malt tax, but the transfer to the Beer Duty was an evil thing for the tenant farmers. It has undoubtedly led to a diminished use of English barley. If the repeal of the malt tax was so vital a question in the days of agricultural prosperity, how much more so must it be at the present time, when the agricultural interest is suffering so much? The statement the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made is, however, satisfactory to a certain extent. I gather he is prepared another year, providing he has a satisfactory surplus, to re-consider the whole question of the Beer Duty. On my own behalf, and as a representative of a barley-growing district, I may say we are ready to accept the statement; we are ready to place implicit confidence in the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he will do his very utmost in the future for a suffering industry, and help us to the best of his ability, that instead of increasing taxation on the produce of the land, he will act in a contrary direction, and relieve taxation as much as he can. On these grounds I do not move the Amendment that stands in my name.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I only just wish to say, in reply, that I appreciate the action of my hon. Friend, and I stand entirely by what I have said. I am always extremely anxious to avoid giving vague pledges, and I do not wish Members to go one whit in their expectations beyond what I am able to promise, but the hon. Gentleman may rely on my doing all that my words imply. In reference to what has been said by the hon. Member as to the irritation caused by this proposal, I am quite aware of it; but I adhere to the opinion I have frequently expressed that this irritation and alarm are not justified by the slight increase of duty proposed. I can assure the hon. Member that every Member of the Government is profoundly desirous of promoting the interests of agriculture, but I doubt myself if it can be shown that the interest of beer and those of agriculture are identical; and I can fancy that there may be circumstances in which agitations such as this, with regard to the Beer Duty, may make it more difficult to promote the interests of agriculture. With this I hope hon. Members will be satisfied to leave the matter as it now stands, and I trust that much of the irritation will vanish when it is seen that the duty does not affect the Eastern Counties, or any other barley-growing district in the way apprehended.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 4 agreed to.

Clause 5.

*MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport): I am very sorry that when so important a subject as that raised by my Amendments on this clause is being

discussed there is such a very small House. I see there are only six or seven Members present to hear what I am saying.

Attention having thus been drawn to the fact that there were not 40 Members present, the House was counted and 40 Members were found to be present.

*Mr. SYDNEY GEDGE: I beg to move on Clause 5, page 2, line 27, after "Ireland," to insert "in respect of any person dying." I am satisfied that if hon. Members who have just come in would only stop and hear what is said, they would see the justice of the Amendments. Although I can only formally move the first on the Paper that Amendment is repeated seven times, and applies to other Sub-sections of the clause. The apparently harmless enactment of the clause is that in certain circumstances an executor or trustee shall deliver a statement of value, but the next clause says that this statement must be impressed with a stamp of 1 per cent *ad valorem* duty. The question is, what shall be the point of time which shall determine whose property shall be subject to the new tax? The object of my Amendments is to provide that it shall be chargeable on the property of those who shall die on or after the day named in the Bill. I find that in the 6th Clause my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has admitted the principle that the death of the person is the proper time at which to ascertain whether or not the Estate Duty is to be paid. In this 5th Clause the Chancellor of the Exchequer must have exercised his ingenuity in discovering varieties of tests. The point of time differs in each of the Sub-sections. In former days it used to be very easy to obtain probate of the will or letters of administration within a few days after death. But since 1881, the reverse has been the case. It used to be possible to deliver the account some time after probate or administration had been granted. The account has now to be carried on before probate. In the first instance, the executor is bound to ascertain exactly the value of the estate at the time he makes his affidavit, and very often it is exceedingly difficult for him to do so. An unconscientious man will make a guess and swear to anything, and if the Bill passes in its present form, there will be a large inducement to such men to swear loosely and thereby escape payment of the Estate Duty. I think it very much better that the general Revenue should suffer than we should do anything unfair or unjust, and it is manifestly unfair to say that 1 per cent shall be paid, say, if the executor happens to be abroad or for some other reason the application for probate is deferred over the 1st of June. When we turn to the next Sub-section, we find it deals not with the application for probate as does the first Sub-section, but with the case of probate having been granted. We are told that when the personal property does not exceed £10,000, but the deceased has been possessed of real property, and has exercised the power of disposing of it, and the value of the two together exceeds £10,000, although probate has been applied for before the 1st June, in the event of delay occurring at the Probate Office through redtapeism, the estate is to be mulcted in the new duty. If my Amendment is not adopted, there will be a distinct inducement to the clerks at Somerset House to cause delays, in order to obtain *kudos* by increasing the revenue derivable from the tax. Then, I submit, it is the date of the death of the man that should be the criterion, and not when the estate comes in. If this Sub-section is adopted, it will be a strong temptation to concealment. The 4th Sub-section follows on the same lines. Either some mistake has been discovered or the value of the property has turned out to be greater than has been expected. A conscientious administrator thinks it right to set the matter straight, and delay will be occasioned. In all these cases in fairness these ingenious varieties of time and tests which it is proposed to apply should not be accepted by the Committee. The test should be the same as in Section 6, dealing with the Succession Duty, and the time of death ought to be the period taken.

Amendment proposed, Clause 5, page 2, line 27, after "Ireland," to insert "in respect of any person dying."—(*Mr. Sydney Gedge.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

*The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir E. Clarke, Plymouth): I will not follow

the criticisms that have just been addressed to the Committee on the sub-sections, because they will have to be dealt with if there is any inaccuracy in the language at a later period. But it is not right to say that there has been any deviation from principle in dealing with these matters. When an additional duty is imposed it should be imposed with reference to some date or other, and the principle observed in this Measure is that where a duty is paid on the passing of an instrument the date of that instrument shall be looked at. Where, however, as in Clause C, the value of the succession is that which passes on the death of a person, then the date of the death of that person is the date to be taken. It has been suggested that between this and the 1st of June there will be an inducement to the clerks at the Probate Office to be careless or negligent, in order to put the matter off until the 1st of June, so as to secure the payment of the tax, but I do not think that is an argument which will weigh with the Committee. The same principle has been adopted in the five sub-sections, and the Amendment of the hon. Member would be altogether inconsistent with that principle.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): This is a practical matter that falls mostly within the province of law agents, and I can understand the reason which prompted the hon. Member opposite to move the Amendment. The date of death is not a matter that can be disputed, but there is frequently a difficulty, after death, of making out the inventory. In the cases where the deceased has been in business you have to appraise the value of the property, and you have to state its mercantile value in the letters of administration. From no fault on the part of an executor there may often be delay in applying for probate, from causes such as disputed claims. You might have a case of a man dying and leaving an estate worth £20,000, which, because the executor is in a position to lodge the account at once, will escape duty altogether, and you may have another case of an estate of £10,000, which, through delay in making out the account, owing to no fault of the executor, will have to pay the duty. In deciding what is fair in allocating the duty, regard should be had to the equities of the matter, and we should not lay down such rules as would enable one man to escape and would bring another in. The date of death is a very reasonable period to fix. Cases frequently occur in practice where the value of an estate is enhanced by discoveries made after the presentation of the original letters. I know that the irritation in the country is strong on the subject, and I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to take into consideration whether he cannot obviate the present arrangement, under which, by making little alterations in the dates and so forth, he apparently hopes to catch a few trifling sums, which, while creating a good deal of feeling, do not contribute much to the revenue. The system is one which cannot be defended on principle, and it is one by which advantage is to be taken of the exigencies of particular estates, where the man who is unable to take out his letters of administration before a certain date will be placed in a worse position than the man who has been enabled to do so.

SIR H. DAVEY (Stockton): I think the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge) has pointed out some difficulties in Clause 5 which are well deserving the attentive consideration of the Government, and I do not think the Solicitor General accurately dealt with the point. The hon. Member for Stockport has pointed to one or two instances in which it is perfectly obvious that the draftsman of this Clause had no consistent scheme in his mind. In Sub-section 1 of Clause 5 the date from which the duty attaches is the date of application for letters of probate, while in Sub-section 2 the date is the date of the granting of letters of administration, which may be months after the application, and I say that if the duty dates from the application for probate in the first sub-section, the same date ought to be fixed in the second sub-section. But that is not all, and the hon. Member for Stockport did not do justice to his own case; because sub-section 1 says:—

"Where in the case of any person applying for probate or letters of administration granted in England or Ireland on or after the first day of June 1889, or in the case of any person exhibiting an inventory in Scotland on or after that day."

Yet it will be seen that the exhibition

of an inventory in Scotland coincides with the application for probate in England. The more I consider these duties, the more impressed am I with the intricate confusion that is being introduced into the whole system. I think attention ought to be directed to sub-section *a*, which says:—

"If the value of the estate and effects in respect whereof duty was charged on the former affidavit or inventory under Section 27 of the Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1881, exceeded £10,000, the person delivering the further affidavit or exhibiting the additional inventory shall deliver together therewith a statement of the value of the estate and effects included therein, or of the increased value of the estate and effects in the former affidavit or inventory as the case may be."

But the next Sub-section says that, if the value is less than £10,000, the duty shall not be payable at all. I think the contention of the hon. Member for Stockport well worthy of the attention of the Government.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I would point out to my hon. and learned Friends that under Sub-section A, if in respect of an estate a person dies after the 1st June, and the duty has been paid up to £10,000, or more, and afterwards it is found that the amount has to be increased, a further statement may be delivered showing the value of the estate and the effects not included in the former affidavit or inventory, while Sub-section B provides that, if the Estate is supposed to have been less than £10,000, but the value exceeds that sum, the total value is to be included. The difference in the language arises from the payment in one case of the increased amount and in the other of the total amount.

MR. CALDWELL: Let me point out that in the case of real property you charge the duty on the estate of any man dying on or after the 1st June, 1889, while in the case of personalty you are taking power to charge the estates of persons who may have died six months before, but as to whom no one has applied for letters of administration before the 1st June, 1889. It is clear that letters of administration cannot be applied for till after a man is dead.

SIR E. CLARKE: If hon. Members will look at Sub-Section 8 they will see that it says:—

"Where a further affidavit or additional inventory is delivered or exhibited of any estate or effects of a deceased person after a former affidavit or inventory of the estate and effects of the same person has been delivered or exhibited and recorded prior to the first day of June one thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine, it shall not be necessary to deliver any statement of the value of the estate and effects of such person under such section."

That I think carries out the object in view, while the words of Sub-Section 4 are also necessary because they keep the entire provisions of the clause in harmony.

Amendment put and negatived.

*MR. GEDGE: I wish now to move an Amendment, the object of which is to extend the tax to all cases in which a person leaves upwards of £10,000 in personalty and realty whether the realty is left by will or by appointment under a deed. This Bill, as it stands, restricts the tax to cases in which over £10,000 in personalty and realty is left "by will." I do not think the tax ought to be imposed even as proposed by the Bill, but if it is to imposed I do not see why it should be restricted to cases of property left by will. A man who has £9,000 personalty and £5,000 realty to leave would be advised by his solicitors to leave the realty by deed and then when he died the whole £14,000 would escape this tax. The deed would not require an *ad valorem* stamp, but merely a 10s. stamp, and thus a considerable sum would be saved. I do not see why this loophole should be left unstopped if the tax is to be imposed at all.

THE CHAIRMAN: A question of procedure arises here, and I hold that this Amendment cannot be moved. The effect of such a proposal would be to effect an alteration in substance of the Bill by increasing the scope of the tax; therefore it cannot be taken.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I propose to amend Clause 5, page 3, line 11, by inserting after the word "will," the words "or other testamentary instrument."

Amendment agreed to.

*MR. S. GEDGE: I beg to move as an amendment to Clause 5, page 3, line 26, the insertion after the word "person," of the words "in respect of the estate and effects of any person dying on or after the first day of June 1889."

*SIR. R. WEBSTER : I have stated that it was necessary to insert words to prevent Sub-sections *a* and *b* applying to estates where the owners die before the 1st June, 1889, and if the hon. Gentleman looks at the Bill he will see that the draftsman has dealt with the matter in Sub-section 8.

*MR. S. GEDGE : I think when we come to Sub-section 8 the hon. and learned Gentleman will see that it is not entirely as he supposes, as I do not think that that Sub-section will meet the point. I hope my Amendment will be accepted.

*MR. GOSCHEN : We cannot accept the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman, as we think that the Clause as it stands entirely disposes of the question.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. GLADSTONE: In moving the Amendment of which I have given notice I will endeavour to avoid anything which is not at all necessary for the purpose. It is necessary to remind the Committee of the condition in which, according to our contention, the question of the Death Duties was left last year, when enormous advantages had been given in the first instance in respect of the rates, the whole ultimate incidence of which would be in relief of real property. At the very time of the readjustment of the rates, when this enormous advantage had been given to real property, the readjustment of the Death Duty was made between realty and personalty. And the effect of that readjustment, according to our estimate, according to our demonstration, was that personal property passing upon death was left liable to pay three times the duty charged on real property. We thought that a case which it was necessary for us as a body to take up and to do our best to bring to the minds and proper action of the country, thereby establishing the case of this grievance, this extreme and enormous inequality to the disadvantage of the holder of personal property as compared with real. That, Sir, is retrospective. Now comes the present year, when we come to the way in which Her Majesty's Government produce this plan for imposing a distinct duty upon realty and personalty alike. In many respects it will be upon realty and personalty alike. Wherever an individual, becoming a successor to realty, takes an interest equal to £10,000, he will be in precisely the same position as if he had taken up the amount under a will, established by probate, or by taking out letters of administration. In that case there will be absolute equality. There will also be an equality at the other end. That is to say that where the entire estate in respect of which Probate Duty is paid, does not amount to £10,000, the party or parties interested in that estate will be in the same position as an individual taking an estate in realty which is equal to £10,000. Therefore, let it be understood that up to this point equality will subsist. There is another and most important point under which a new and I must say gross inequality—amounting, I confess in my opinion, to a gross injustice—will occur. A great inequality will be introduced and established by the plan of the Government if it is carried. That is in the case where the entire estate, in respect to which probate is taken out, amounts to a sum exceeding £10,000, but where either a portion of the interest or of the interests are severed under £10,000 each. In that case every one of these interests will be subject to this Death Duty. I observe in the first instance that such inequality entirely destroys and sweeps out of view the contention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when proposing the reduction to £10,000, which was—it is an argument which I will not stop to dispute, because it is not one with which I am at all concerned—that he was working out a distinction analogous to that established under the income tax, where £400 is the line at which exemption from the tax absolutely ceases. If we are to be told that we are to impose a tax of 1 per cent upon the capital value accruing to persons taking property by will, however small and insignificant their personal interests may be, it is quite obvious that instead of establishing an analogy, we are entirely differing from the analogy by going in the opposite direction. Because, whereas where the income tax recommends exemption up to a certain point, and beyond that certain point a partial exemption, we should be establishing by the plan of the Government, as regards this enormously extended class of case, a principle

with no degree of minuteness in the interests taken, and exempting the individual from the payment of this extra duty. It seems to me a proposal of that kind is an astonishing proposal. From a Party point of view, nothing in the world could suit our Party better. There is no constituency in the country in which it will not form a favourite topic for every Liberal candidate. I do not know what sort of handling it will receive from hon. Gentlemen opposite, especially those who represent constituencies in which personal property is predominant. That I hope they will consider before they determine upon the course they are to take with respect to this proposal. But I must frankly confess, as between Party men and Party mer, I do not recollect any financial proposal that was more convenient and more advantageous to us in a Party spirit. We will work it heartily; I think we may say that we will work it with effect, and work it with effect because we are standing upon the principle of equality and justice. Now, Sir, let me consider the cases that will happen. Let me take the case—I will not say extreme case, because extreme cases will happen, that is to say, very strong and vivid illustrations of the nature of this proposal and the operation of this proposal will undoubtedly come up. But I will take a case which is perfectly natural. I will take the case of a farm of the value of £16,000. Well, upon the farm, in all likelihood, I may take the value of the farm stock at about £3,000, or between £3,000 and £4,000. Now, taking an average of lives, and speaking generally, the successor to that farm, under the Succession Duty Act, could well afford to pay this duty. That will not be contested. As a rule, the value of an estate which he takes for his life will be under £10,000. I doubt very much whether such a case will occur anywhere as an interest of over £10,000 taken by a successor. As a general rule, there will be no such case as the case of a life interest in a farm where the sum will reach £10,000. Now, what is the kind of legislation which this popularly elected assembly is invited to consider? It is this. When a farmer dies, the next holder under the entail comes in, and he does not pay this severe estate tax. The farmer does; and his heirs, whose interest, the farm being of £16,000 value, is not of £10,000 or £8,000, but £3,000, will have to pay the estate tax.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: Why does he?

Mr. GLADSTONE: He will have to pay the estate tax wherever it happens, after it comes to him under the probate, the total of which exceeds £10,000.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: Well, are there many such cases?

Mr. GLADSTONE: There are many of such cases; there are hundreds and thousands of such cases. It seems hardly necessary that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have put to me the question, because I have already stated that I was arguing exclusively with reference to such cases, and that no inequality whatever will subsist where the total interest under the will was less than £10,000. Well that is one case. Now I will give another case. The principle of exemption has always, I believe—always within my recollection—been recognised under the Death Duties, although to a very low amount. I think, if I remember aright, until the year 1881, everybody was liable to the payment of Probate and Legacy Duty except where the interest taken over was of a value of £200. At that time some important changes, or what I may call reforms, were introduced into the Death Duties. Under the necessity of exacting a great deal of revenue by taxation, I know of no more proper subject of taxation than estates passing at death. But the grievance, especially of the small people, was that they were all liable to what is usually a much heavier burden than the burden of the duty itself, namely, the burden of the charges entailed. They were obliged to go through the formalities attached to a much larger property, and then the person taking less than £200 at death was subject to that tax. We made a change at that time—I am not quite certain whether I recollect with accuracy, but if I do not it is not material to my point—by raising the limit of exemption, not so high as it ought to have been raised, and as, I think, it could have been raised, but we raised it to £1,000, if I remember aright. And we effected a greater and more important change by an arrangement of this kind, that wherever the estate was under that limit the Revenue officer should be charged with the whole transaction of the business, and that the accounts, and the whole

operations connected with the property should be settled by and through him upon a charge of, I think, 30s., in respect both of Legacy Duty, and likewise the trouble he might be at, and which would stand in lieu of all those charges. Now let me take the case of two persons under a will receiving money in respect of property in which probate is taken out. It seems to me intolerable that if we have reduced the total charge upon these people to £1 10s. for their Death Duties and other law charges, so as to include the whole transaction of the business, we are now to come down upon them and to subject them to a charge of £3 extra. Why, it seems to me so extravagant and so outrageous a proposition that—although, as I have said, nothing could be more convenient to us who sit on this side of the House—I cannot help hoping that the mention of such a case as that may have some weight with the Government. I have a great deal of hope of them. The aim of my Amendment is to establish equality without increasing the tax payable by any one. There may be another mode by which equality might be established, namely, by providing the mode of succession under the Act of 1853; but the effect of that would be to increase the duty; and we do not desire to increase the duty—what we desire is to remove the inequality. I may here refer to a change which I think would give more complete effect to the intention of my Amendment. In the fourth line of the Amendment instead of reading, "any legacy upon which Legacy Duty is chargeable," it might read, "Any legacy within the meaning of the Legacy Duty Acts," and I will with the sanction of the Committee propose so to alter the Amendment. Our idea is that if 1 per cent is chargeable it is clear that those whose estates are of less than £10,000 value ought not to be liable to the present rates. Our proposition is that as the Chancellor of the Exchequer has thought fit to charge only the amount of interest taken by each individual successor in the case of realty, so he ought to charge only the amount of interest taken by each individual successor in the case of personalty. It has nothing to do with the aggregate. It does not signify one whit to the man who receives one or two thousand pounds whether the probate is taken out for £10,000, £20,000, or £100,000. However large the probate is, and however small his interest, his share is to be diminished by this serious tax of 1 per cent on his capital, while the more fortunate person taking possession under the Succession Duty is placed in a totally different position and has not to pay anything. In this country, where there are multitudes of cases in which the probate is taken out for very moderate sums, it would be very hard in those cases to come down on the man who takes the interest under a will, and, however small that interest, to charge him this serious tax, from which other persons, substantially in the same position, are to be altogether exempt. Upon these grounds I now beg to move the Amendment which stands on the Paper in my name.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 40, at the end, to add the following Subsection:—

(9) Provided always, that whenever the value of any succession in personal or moveable property under "The Succession Duty Act, 1853," or any legacy within the meaning of the Legacy Duty Acts, shall have been diminished by reason of any duty having been charged and paid under the Act in respect of the principal fund or estate out of which the subject of the succession of the legacy is payable, or of which it forms part, and the value of such succession or such legacy together with the amount by which it has been diminished shall be less than ten thousand pounds, then, and in every such case so much of the duty paid under the Act as is equal to the amount by which the value of the succession or the legacy has been diminished shall be repaid to the person entitled to the succession or legacy."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be then added."

*MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman has stated that one of the objects of his Amendment is to serve electioneering purposes.

MR. GLADSTONE: What I said was, the result, not the object.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The result of what?

MR. GLADSTONE: Of my Amendment.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman said it was with a direct view to electioneering tactics that his Amendment was proposed.

Several hon. MEMBERS: No, no.

*MR. GOSCHEN: Hon. Members who say "no" were not in the House at the time. The right hon. Gentleman has explained how the matter should be

put before the constituencies. Hon. Members opposite need not be shocked, because the right hon. Gentleman said, "Here is a case we are not sorry for."

MR. GLADSTONE: I am very sorry for it.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentlemen said he was not sorry.

Several Hon. MEMBERS: He never said so.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: I wonder on what terms we are to conduct these debates. The right hon. Gentleman was allowed to speak without any interruption, but the moment a reply is attempted—I hope I may say so with the greatest good humour—the speaker is interrupted immediately. That conduct I am sure will not commend itself to the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman stated distinctly that use was to be made of this motion in the country in order to represent the gross inequality existing in the treatment of personalty and realty.

MR. GLADSTONE: I said I believed that this proposal would, from a Party point of view, prove a great gain to us, and be very detrimental to hon. Gentlemen opposite. I thought it only honest to state as plainly as I could how it would be made use of in the country.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I am extremely grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for the candour with which he has stated his case, and I am sorry so much irritation should have been shown. The question is one that is to be raised in the country. As to that there is no mistake. But how is it going to be raised? The right hon. Gentleman said he was going to state that "here again is an instance of the gross difference with which personalty and realty are treated"; but the right hon. Gentleman forgets that settled personalty is treated in precisely the same manner as settled realty. This the right hon. Gentleman did not state.

An Hon. MEMBER: Not under will.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I did not say under will. Remember I used the words "settled personalty;" and said that that and settled realty were to be treated in precisely the same manner in this Bill, and therefore when it is said that here is a gross case of inequality, I hope it will be remembered that in the case of settlements we have put these two classes of property on the same footing. I think hon. Gentlemen opposite will at least admit that equality is our object. We have not attempted to make any difference between personalty and realty, but we are obliged to make a difference between property passing under settlement and property passing by will, and that applies to personalty as well as to realty. The right hon. Gentleman gave an instance of a farm of the value of £16,000. He said the owner of the estate would probably not pay anything on succeeding to that farm because the value of the succession would be only his life interest, and that would be less than £10,000. In order to strengthen his position he selects the case where the successor takes only a life interest. The right hon. Gentleman says that the life interest would escape if less than £10,000, though practically worth £16,000, but that the poor farmer whose stock was worth only £3,000 or £4,000 would have to pay. A contrast is thus drawn between the owner of an estate of £16,000 and the farmer with £3,000 or £4,000 worth of stock. But if the farmer had only £3,000 or £4,000 he would not pay.

MR. GLADSTONE: My meaning was this, that if a farmer takes an interest of £3,000 or £4,000 which forms part of an estate amounting to upwards of £10,000, he has to pay while the rest of the estate goes free.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I wish that the right hon. Gentleman would make these distinctions at the proper time. What the right hon. Gentleman stated was that the farmer would have to pay and the owner would not pay. I call attention to this mode of putting the case in order to show how extremely easy it is to create false impressions in the mind of the public. With regard to the £3,000, I understand the right hon. Gentleman to refer to a legacy, and to be thinking of a legatee who receives the money out of an estate of a larger amount than £10,000. In that case the residuary legatee would have to pay the additional duty. By all means let the case be argued from the point of view of the residuary legatee. But let it not go before the country as a case of robbery of orphans. Now I will take the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman. Suppose a case of an estate of £100,000. The right hon.

Gentleman will agree that an estate like that ought to pay the 1 per cent. Suppose it were left equally among 12 children. In that case, under the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman no part of that £100,000 would pay a shilling of this 1 per cent. That, therefore, is not a suggestion which we can accept in the interest of the revenue. There are many cases where personalty of a large amount is divided among five, six, seven, or eight recipients. I ask, as a practical question, whether landed property is often treated in that way. I have made inquiries and find it is very rarely the case that real estate is divided in this manner. As a practical matter therefore, this supposed injustice will very rarely arise. Where there are exemptions there will always be anomalies; but the question is whether these anomalies are sufficient to cause us to give up the exemptions. There are strong grounds of justice and expediency for such exemptions, and by the proposals of the Government small and poor estates will be let off. The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman may have the effect of letting off estates of £80,000 or £100,000 which are not to contribute to the revenue, in so far as they are divided among persons who receive less than £10,000. The Government have no desire or intention to favour one class of property more than another. I think I may be said to have treated realty and personalty with greater equality than any other Chancellor of the Exchequer. But I admit that there is some inequality arising from the practical impossibility of dealing with real estate as you deal with personal estate. In the case of personalty something can be taken at once from the corpus, but in real estate it is a great practical difficulty to dispose at once of part of the estate. Our whole legislation recognizes the distinction between the two classes of property. I disclaim any intention of giving any unfair advantage to one kind of property, but I cannot accept a proposal which may destroy two-thirds of the Revenue which the Government wish to obtain from the new duty.

SIR HORACE DAVEY: Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that the Government have no desire or intention of creating any inequality of taxation between real and personal estate. But, Sir, I must say that if that is the intention of the Government—if they have no desire or intention in that direction—they have been singularly unsuccessful in carrying their desire into effect. I venture to say my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian was absolutely correct when he said that not only does this tax not redress any existing inequalities of taxation between real and personal estate, but that it actually introduces fresh anomalies and fresh inequalities, and aggravates confusion which already exists in the levying of the Death Duties. Now, Sir, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian to task for not having called the attention of the House to the fact that settled personalty only pays the new duty on the value of the succession in the same way as real estate. It was not necessary for him to refer to that, for if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had done my right hon. Friend the courtesy to study his Amendment, he would have seen that that Amendment has nothing whatever to do either with settled realty or with settled personalty, but merely with personalty which passes in account by probate or letters of administration. The contrast which my right hon. Friend desired to draw in the observations which he addressed to the House was between the Estate Duty, as it was levied upon personalty passing by probate or intestacy, and the Estate Duty as it was levied on real estate, devised, it may be, by the same will, or passing by the same intestacy. Now, Sir, in his speech the Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted that there were great anomalies, and he also admitted that he had been unable, notwithstanding his burning desire to do so, to assimilate taxation between real and personal estate. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian has suggested a mode in which that may be done so far as regards personalty and realty passing by the same will; but what is the inequality between them—an inequality which is aggavated by this new Death Duty? I will point out once more, and I do not think that any hon. or right hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House will dispute the correctness of what I am going to say,

the whole vice and the whole difficulty arises from this, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has endeavoured, as regards the personal estate, to increase the Probate Duty under the name of the Estate Duty; but as regards real estate he only increases the Succession Duty. It is perfectly clear that the difficulty in this case is that the Probate Duty is levied on the whole estate before distribution, while in the case of the Succession Duty it is only levied on the value of the share which the devisee of the real estate takes for his own enjoyment. The result is that every estate, the value of which exceeds £10,000, pays this Estate Duty, and although it may be divided between half-a-dozen people, the persons who are beneficially interested in the estate upon which this Estate Duty is claimed, although they take only £2,000, have to pay; and on the other hand, in the case of real estate which may be worth £50,000, if it has to be divided between six children, not one of those six children will pay a single penny. I do not think that can be contradicted by anyone. Again, we will take the case of a man with a personal estate valued at £12,000 and a landed estate worth £9,000 only. He leaves the landed estate to his eldest son, who may go and sell the next day and put the £9,000 into his pocket while he pays no Estate Duty; but if the man divides the £12,000 amongst his four younger children, who only get £3,000 apiece, then every one of these four is subject to the tax. Sir, these things cannot be gainsaid. I quite agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that many of the difficulties and anomalies arise from the mode in which the Death Duties are levied, but we complain, Sir, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has introduced a new Death Duty. He has introduced fresh complications and a Death Duty which is to be levied on a new principle and on a different principle as regards personalty and real estate. And, Sir, it does not stop there, and I beg to ask the attention of gentlemen who are interested in commercial pursuits in the country to this point. Members of the Committee are aware that landed property which is held for partnership purposes is in the eyes of the Chancellor of the Exchequer personal estate, and landed estate which is employed in partnership for the purposes of commerce in this country will be brought in under the new Estate Duty, and will have to pay the tax leviable on personal property; whereas real estate, not owned in partnership for commercial purposes, will pay the duty only on the interest of the successor. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was very severe in some remarks he made as to the illustrations employed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. I can only say that I understood the right hon. Gentleman distinctly to say that he was referring to a case where a farmer on administration took £3,000, the total of the estate exceeding £10,000, and I cannot but think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer must have lost, or have omitted to hear, something that my right hon. Friend said. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, I venture to say, was perfectly accurate in the illustration he gave. Under this Act it would be possible that a farmer who succeeded, it may be, his father and received £3,000 in the shape of farming stock out of his father's estate, would have to pay the duty of 1 per cent, whereas the real estate, although it might be of a value exceeding £10,000, would altogether escape payment of the duty. And now, Sir, one word as to this Amendment, which I cannot help thinking the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has misunderstood. The right hon. Gentleman is, of course, aware that the word legacy, under the Legacy Duty Acts, includes the residue and also the share of an estate passing under intestacy, and no doubt the word legacy was used advisedly in this Amendment. To make it more clear, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has informed the Committee of the alteration he has made. Now, the object of the Amendment undoubtedly is this, that where the share which people take under the estate has been diminished by reason of the exaction of this duty out of the personal estate, there should be a drawback or return upon those shares where they are under £10,000, and the object of that is to assimilate it to real estate in the same way in order to make beneficial interests under a will exceeding £10,000 liable to the tax. No person taking beneficial interest in real

estate under a will would be liable to it unless the interest he takes exceeds £10,000. Sir, I am sure the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian would be far from saying that some better way may not be devised for meeting these anomalies and difficulties. We have endeavoured to meet them in the best way we can, and dislocating as little as possible the scheme brought forward in the Act. No doubt a better scheme would be one which reformed the Death Duties altogether, but we cannot do that, so we have done the best we can by indicating in the form of this Amendment the anomalies that exist, the way in which they are aggravated, and the way in which we think they ought to be dealt with.

*MR. R. B. HALDANE (Haddington): It is with considerable diffidence that I rise to say something on the speech which was addressed to the Committee by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because it appears that nobody can say anything from this side of the House without his motives being misunderstood. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian made a speech which was received by the Chancellor of the Exchequer with loud complaints, and when the right hon. Gentleman ventured to explain that his statement had been misunderstood, the interruption was received with still louder complaints. Then when the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Stockton ventured to make an explanation, he was received with jeers at his supposed superior legal learning. Well, Sir, if there be no just man on this side of the House, even on the Front Opposition Bench in the eyes of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what chance have those who sit behind? We shall be told when we venture to make any criticism on the proposals of the Government that we do so for the purposes of misleading the Electorate. As an earnest of what some of us hope to do all over the country when the proper time comes, I shall endeavour now to state the effects of the Government proposal. Now, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us a number of things. He has told us that in this Bill, settled personalty is treated on precisely the same footing as settled realty. I shall presently take an opportunity to controvert this. He told us beforehand that our Amendment was one which was bound to fail in its purpose, because its purpose was not one which could be properly carried out. Let us test these things by concrete cases. Take the case of a man who has got land worth £50,000 and six children. He leaves the land among the six children equally, and there is not a share of it which will be called upon to pay a penny of this new duty; but suppose he happens to have in addition to this a sum of £3,000, and supposing he leaves the whole of the land to his eldest son, whilst the sum of £3,000 is divided amongst the younger children. Under the clause introduced into this Bill, for I believe it was not shadowed out in the original Bill, but was the result of an afterthought of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I mean Sub-section 2, Clause 5, this miserable £3,000 will be charged with duty, while the £50,000 of realty will escape scot free. And that is what the Chancellor of the Exchequer called carrying out the intention which he announced in his great speech last year of treating realty and personalty as on precisely the same footing. But he goes further: he says after all this is not a serious matter because it is only the residuary legatee who suffers, and he seems to think the residuary legatee is entitled to little or no consideration. Why, Sir, in nine cases out of ten where only a small sum passes under a will, the children of the testator are residuary legatees. The common form of the will is to give legacies to those whom they may concern and to divide the residue among the children, and the very purpose of this Amendment is to reach the people who, in nine cases out of ten, will thus be constituted residuary legatees. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that, at all events, settled reality and settled personalty were treated in precisely the same way, and he challenged us to go to the country and have the honesty to tell the electors that such was the case. Well, Sir, we shall go to the electors and tell them that settled realty and settled personalty were treated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Bill, but not on the same footing, because we shall point out to them in the first place that, whereas settled personality is charged upon what is equivalent to the

fee simple value, settled land is not charged on the feesimple value at all, but is dealt with by a separate clause which I should have thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not read the Bill when he spoke. By Sub-section 5 of Section 6 settled land is charged upon an artificial annual value in a way which is so astounding that I cannot but believe there will be considerable discussion upon it. It is said to be chargeable upon the principal value, but then there comes in an extraordinary proviso that the principal value shall not exceed the amount which would be chargeable on an annuity. Now, Sir, would it be believed that the highest capital value to be taken is 24·4 years?

*Mr. GOSCHEN: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will be obliged to me for informing him that that part of our proposals were taken verbatim from the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers).

*Mr. HALDANE: I am sorry to hear it. I would remind the right hon. Gentleman what was said by a distinguished Leader of his own Party—namely, that many things have happened since then, and I would remind him furthur that we are not dealing with the ordinary Succession Duties, but with a new Death Duty, the fifth or sixth which will have been called into existence, and which, instead of simplifying the subject, will add a new complication to it. But the fact remains that, instead of charging land on its fee simple, or even on an assessment of its annual value you are charging it on 24·4 years' purchase of its annual value. Why, Sir, even in the case of perpetual pensions, which we heard about to-night, the Government proposes to take 27 years, and yet in the case of land—for some mysterious and unexplained reason which, of course, has nothing to do with the Tory Party opposite, and which is wholly unconnected with the speeches we have recently heard from Gentlemen opposite—land is to be treated on this special footing. We shall support this Amendment not because it is the best that could be devised, but because it would be out of order to move an Amendment which would increase the duty on land. We welcome the principle of the graduated Death Duty, and should like to see it applied to land and to personalty alike, but we must content ourselves with the lesser, but still just, endeavour of getting, as far as possible, equal treatment for land and personalty.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 181; Noes 257.—(Div. List, No. 116.)

Clause 6.

*Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to move in Clause 6, page 5, line 40, after "property," to insert "and in estimating such principal value regard may be had to the annual value after making such allowances (if any) as ought to be made under the said Act." This Amendment is framed in reference to the point alluded to by my hon. Friend the Member for Haddingtonshire (Mr. Haldane) respecting the inequalities created by this Bill as between personalty and realty. Under the Bill, the capitalized value of realty is to be assessed to the Succession Duty, and is to be estimated simply and solely on the net annual value of the estate. In a very large number of cases the result of taking the net annual value alone as the basis of capitalized value will be that estates having a very large market value will practically altogether escape the duty. On many estates the annual rental is very small indeed. Such estates as are commonly called luxurious estates and estates which, in some future time, will be probably very valuable for building purposes, will under this Bill practically escape the proposed duty. I move the Amendment to give the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer an opportunity of carrying out the principles he announced in his Budget Speech of equality and similarity between realty and personalty. My proposal, practically, is that in estimating the capital value, attention may be paid to other factors, as well as the net annual value, so that the real market value may be ascertained.

Amendment proposed,

"In page 5, line 40, to leave out from the word "property," to the word "The," in line 42, in order to insert the words "and in estimating such principal value regard may be had to the annual value after making such allowances (if any) as ought to be made under the said Act."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of clause."

*MR. GOSCHEN: The Government is unable to accept this Amendment, because by doing we should follow a false analogy and create a real injustice.

SIR H. DAVEY: I have an Amendment on the Paper, but of course I cannot move it because it relates to the question raised by my hon. Friend. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told us when the Resolution was before the Committee of Ways and Means that the intention of the Government was to assimilate real and personal estates. It is perfectly clear that if the values are assessed in the way indicated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, really on the existing annual value, you will not by any means get anything like the real feasible value of the property. I believe I am right in saying that for the purpose of Succession Duty a property of £5,000 cannot be assessed at more than £2,800, or something of that kind. That may be right or not, but do not let us hear again that real and personal estates are to be assimilated.

MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon): I can confirm what has fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman from my own personal experience. I have a property worth, I suppose, £25,000, from which the rental is £140 a year. Now, just think what the proportion is to what I should have to pay if the value were invested in Consols.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): This clause creates another inequality, and not an inequality between realty and personalty, but an inequality between two classes of realty, and the one class of realty which the Chancellor of the Exchequer is benefiting is the one best able to bear the burden and the one as to which there is the least difficulty of realizing it. Suppose a man inherits property in green fields which represent a succession of £10,000, his successor will have to pay duty on the fee simple value. The Chancellor of the Exchequer points out the difficulty there would be in selling a small portion of that to pay the duty, but the building speculator who has bought land in the neigbourhood of large towns, such as London, Liverpool, Manchester, or Birmingham, which is not lying idle, but year by year is adding from 1s. to 3s. per yard to its value, and represents his profit when he comes to sell, that is to be exempt altogether. This is an inequality, not as between realty and personalty, but as between a heavily burdened class of realty and the class of realty that bears no share in local taxation. Owners of building land escape the payment of their share of local taxation, and now the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to exempt them from Imperial taxation.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I am not surprised at the vigour with which the right hon. Gentleman speaks in relation to this point. No doubt there are cases where it would seem property escapes its fair share of taxation, and if a means can be devised by which I can secure more from my hon. Friend opposite out of that valuable property of which the rental is only £140 I shall be glad. But I wish the Committee to realize that the Government is establishing no new principle. We are following the principle of valuation laid down in the Bill of 1885. Hon. Gentlemen may find fault with my proposal, but it cannot be so very wicked in principle, based as it is on that upon which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian proceeded. Admitting much that has been urged, still I maintain my position that it would be unfair to adopt the proposal of the hon. Member.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has admitted that there are certain inequalities, but then he is aggravating those inequalities. There are ground rents increasing in value that pay no rates or taxes. Again, I may point to America as an example, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer accepts the principle that realty and personalty should be equally rated and taxed, there is no difficulty. In one of my visits to America I thought I would buy a bit of land in Iowa, but before I completed the purchase I found that I should have to pay taxes on the property every year, and so I was deterred from my nefarious speculation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he made a trip across the Atlantic, might pick up some very useful ideas that, put into practice, might save him from the Radical wrath to come.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I need hardly point out that as a general rule ground rents are worth more in point of annual value than Consols. In the case of a rental arising out of ground rents under leases with still 40 or 50 years to run—say of £1,000 a year—the annual value would be calculated at 24 years' purchase, and the duty would only be £240; while if a man had £1,000 a year out of Consols that would be calculated as worth £35,000, and the duty would be £350. Of the inequalities attending the present Succession and Probate Duty by which great ground landlords escape taxation there can be no doubt, and certainly amendment is required.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 203; Noes, 129.—(Div. List, No. 117.)

Original question again proposed.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: As the next Amendment I have to propose is likely to give rise to some debate, perhaps the Government would agree now to report progress and allow us a short time to-morrow afternoon for the purpose?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith, Strand, Westminster): I hope the hon. Member will proceed now. It is the last Amendment, and I think the Committee have entered upon the discussion with a desire to conclude it to-night.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: My proposal is to omit from the clause the words providing that the duty payable in respect of the principal value should not in any case exceed the amount which would be chargeable upon an annuity equal to such annual value according to the highest value in table III. in the Schedule of the Succession Duty Act. The point of this is that, as in the case of the last amendment, I wish to bring the Bill into conformity with the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer when in opening his Budget he said his desire was as far as possible to bring about an equality between realty and personalty. I would strike out the limitation of the number of years' purchase to 24½ in capitalizing the value of realty. I trust the Government will see their way to amend this and allow further discretion for the estimation of the value of land upon a fair basis. Again, I suppose, the Chancellor of the Exchequer will go back upon the precedent of 1885. But let me say no one now cares two straws about what was done in 1885; what people really care to know is how far the Chancellor of the Exchequer is going to carry out his definite promise to bring about similarity and equality between realty and personalty. The Bill bristles with inequalities, but I trust it may be made a little fairer than it is.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have very grave doubts whether it is in the power of the hon. Member to move his Amendment. It proposes to increase the limitation of the tax, and would therefore make the taxation larger than is proposed in the Bill, and that, I think, is outside the power of the Committee to do.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am afraid the Amendment has that tendency, for the Bill as it stands limits the tax on realty so much that any Amendment proposed must necessarily increase the tax. I do not know whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer can suggest any means by which we should be in order in endeavouring to bring about something nearer equality ["No, No."] Then we shall divide against the clause.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): No doubt the objection taken to the Amendment of my hon. Friend must prevail, but that of course does not apply to the operation of the clause. I do not wish to detain the Committee at length, but I wish to place on record—and this we may do by dividing against the clause—our objection to a new tax founded on a principle we regard as entirely unjust as between one class of property and another. The Amendment of my hon. Friend goes to the point of one of our principal objections to the clause. The clause provides that land shall be capitalized at 24½ years' purchase; why should it not be capitalized on the real value, whatever that is? What argument against that can possibly be maintained? The Chancellor of the Exchequer is extremely fond of the *tu quoque* argument, but I should have thought that from questions of arithmetic that favourite argument of his might have been excluded. Also, I do not see how we are to make any progress with finance if it is to be sufficient to say that in former times other people made the same error. What we really want to hear from the Chancellor of the Exchequer

is his own statement of the principle involved. The right hon. Gentleman is understood not to deny that inequalities exist, and it is desired that he should make some more effectual effort to remedy those inequalities. Now, though a private Member cannot make an Amendment such as my hon. Friend desires, the Chancellor of the Exchequer of course can make any change he likes. Is it not rather striking that the Government should be now contending for the capitalization of land at 24½ years' purchase, and earlier in the evening they were fighting for the commutation of pensions on 27 years' purchase? It is utterly impossible to defend it on any principle of equity between the different classes of property. The Government have a majority, and will no doubt defeat the Amendment, but it is our duty to call attention to this extremely unfair incidence of taxation.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I have not referred to the proposals of 1885, which the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down treats with such contempt for the sake of a *tu quoque* argument, but merely because I think that coming with the authority of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, assisted by the right. hon. Gentlemen the Members for Derby and Edinburgh, there must be sound arguments in support of them. The right hon. Gentleman says he does not care two straws for what was done in 1885, but I think those proposals should be at least looked into. It can hardly be unfair and preposterous to establish now a method of valuation which was fair and just in 1885. As for the comparison with the capitalization of pensions, a fixed sum of money payable yearly by the Government may well be more valuable than land yielding a similar amount, which land, perhaps, is not saleable, and the value of which is subject to fluctuations, and under present circumstances is probably falling. The principle capitalization is taken from the value of land with buildings upon it, and 24½ years' purchase is a fair market price. The characteristics of landed and personal property are so different that it would not be sound finance to place them on exactly the same footing.

*MR. CHILDERS: The Chancellor of the Exchequer now for the fourth time has adopted the *tu quoque* argument in reference to what was done in 1885, in which year we were defeated in our proposal to make the Death Duties on realty and personalty equal. The right hon. Gentleman asks why did we not then propose the other change also, that is to say, to value the land, not according to the scale of the old Succession Duty, but according to its real value. Why, how foolish we should have been when making the proposal which added greatly to the Death Duties on land, if we had proposed in addition to raise the scale of valuation; thus in many cases doubling the amount of the increased duties. Of course the plan of charging upon the real value, and not according to an arbitrary scale is a sound one, but had we done this as well as put personalty and realty under the same rate we should have been making a proposition to Parliament which would have had no chance of success. We satisfied ourselves by proposing what we did without suggesting that which would have made a heavy second addition to the tax on real property. I hope that is a clear answer to the *tu quoque* argument of the right hon. Gentleman. Instead of taxing realty and personalty at the same rate as we proposed, he is now enacting a reform of a limited kind, under which realty will not pay so much as personalty, and we say if that is the proposal of the Government, that there is good reason for valuing realty, not in accordance with the artificial scale of the Succession Duty of 1852, but according to its real value, the chief result being that ground rents would no longer escape the proportionate tax due from them. As to the particular proposition on which we wished to take a Division, it is clear it would be out of order to take one on Sub-section "a," and I would ask my hon. Friend not to press his Amendment.

MR. HALDANE: I should like to ask whether the words I propose at the end of the clause, and which I intended as a part of it, could be moved in this place?

THE CHAIRMAN: The clause being out of order, it is unnecessary to entertain that question.

Clause, together with clauses up to Clause 9, added to the Bill.

Clause 10.

*Mr. GEDGE: I beg to move to leave out Sub-section 1. Under the Succession Duty Act if any successor takes a succession and has to give up property which he possesses, he is allowed the value of that which he gives up, to be reckoned as against what he takes, and pays Succession Duty only upon that by which he profits. Say a father possesses an estate of £100,000, and gives a son £20,000, and when he dies devises the estate to his eldest son on condition that he passes over the smaller property to his younger brother. In that case, according to this clause, the son will be allowed to deduct the value of the smaller property against that which he inherits. But supposing the uncle or the grandfather—[*laughter and interruption*]—hon. Members may laugh, but this is a case very likely to happen—I am objecting to an exemption given in the Succession Duty Act being taken away. Supposing an uncle or grandfather—[*continued interruption*]—has devised the smaller estate to the elder son, as frequently happens, and it is to pass on to the younger son when the father dies—[*renewed laughter and interruption*]—then he will not get the benefit of this Return, and it seems to me that if he should get the benefit in one case and not in the other it should be in the last and not in the first—[*Laughter.*]—because in the last case the estate will have paid Succession Duty once. If hon. Members think this is the way to get through business I do not agree with them. [*Laughter.*]

Amendment moved: Clause 10, page 7, leave out Sub-section 1.—(*Mr. Gedge.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section 1 stand part of the clause."

*Mr. GOSCHEN: It was rather difficult to follow the remarks of the hon. Member owing to the interruptions that took place during his speech. I did not quite catch his objection to the clause; but, no doubt, in the Succession Duty Act of 1853, there was an exemption which has been pushed too far, and my objections to the existing interpretation of which I explained as fully as I was able when I introduced the Budget the other day. If there is an allowance made—for instance, £200 a year—to an expectant heir, up to the death of the owner of an estate, and then on that death the estate comes into the possession of the person enjoying that £200 a year, the £200 is deducted from the annual value of the estate, and that, we do not think, should continue. I understand that it has been by a straining of the Statute that this exemption has hitherto prevailed, and we propose to put an end to such exemption.

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. GEDGE: In moving the next Amendment, I merely wish to say that if an estate be worth not more than £300, only 30s. is paid by way of duty, and there is no Succession Duty payable at all, but if this clause is passed that limit of £300 will be reduced to £100, and Succession Duty will become payable even in cases where legacies are under £20. I think that is very hard, and I move the omission of the Sub-section.

Amendment moved, Clause 10, page 7, leave out Sub-section 2.—(*Mr. Gedge.*)

Question proposed—"That Sub-section 2 stand part of the clause."

*Mr. GOSCHEN: I do not think the clause would have the effect pointed out by the hon. Member. The exemption would be left as it exists now, but we desire to prevent these small legacies escaping payment of duty by being purposely left in land. An evasion of duty frequently happens in these cases.

Question put and agreed to.

Clause 10 added to the Bill.

Clause 11.

*Mr. GEDGE [*Laughter*]: It is all very well for hon. Members who have not paid as much attention to the Bill as I have to laugh. I have the interests of the taxpayers at heart. Under present law if a man executes a voluntary settlement on which he has to pay a stamp of 5s. per cent and he dies within three months, the subjects of the voluntary settlement become liable to Probate Duty, and the sum of 5s. per cent is allowed. But in this clause the three months is extended to twelve months, making it more likely that the man will die, and the allowance is taken away. [*Laughter and interruption.*] I beg to move the omission of Sub-section 2.

Amendment moved, Clause 11, page 8, leave out Sub-section 2. (*Mr Gedge.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section 2 stand part of the clause."

SIR E. CLARKE: I cannot agree to the exclusion of this Sub-section.

Question put and agreed to.

Further Amendments agreed to:—

Clause 12, page 9, line 14, after "duty," insert "in case the successor shall not have availed himself of the option given to him by Section 22 of 'The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1888,' or after two years from the date of the last payment by such successor of any instalment or part of the duty, if he has availed himself of such option."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Clause 14, page 10, line 25, at end, add "and no trustee, executor, or administrator shall, after the expiration of such six years, be liable to such duty, if it is proved to the satisfaction of the Commissioners that the account rendered was correct to the best of his knowledge, information, and belief."—(*Mr. Gedge.*)

Bill as amended, reported; as amended, to be considered to-morrow at Two of the clock.

COUNTY COURT APPEALS (IRELAND) [REMUNERATION, &C.]

Resolution reported:

"That it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the remuneration, subsistence allowances, and travelling expenses of any clerks of the Peace or Clerks of the Crown and Peace, who may have additional duties imposed upon them by the provisions of any Act of the present Session to amend the County Court (Ireland) Acts."

Resolution agreed to.

BRIBERY (PUBLIC BODIES) PREVENTION BILL (No. 158).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I think the words "in England" should be inserted. I think it should have to go before a Court of Quarter Sessions in England. Certainly to go before a Court of Quarter Sessions in Ireland is not a very happy prospect.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I understand there is an appeal in Ireland, but if the House is willing to insert the words "in England," they might be considered on Report.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I do not mean to convey that there is no appeal in Ireland. What I mean is this, that supposing a man on the popular side is prosecuted before the Court of Quarter Sessions, he will be convicted, but if he is a Tory he will be discharged. I do not know whether I am in order, but I should move the insertion of the words "in England."

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I rather gather that it is the wish of the hon. and learned Gentleman to confine trial in Ireland to Assizes as distinct from Quarter Sessions. I am not able to express an opinion upon that without consultation with the Solicitor General for Ireland. The alteration might be made on Report, but I am not justified in consenting to it now.

MR. T. M. HEALY: On Report we have only one chance. Unless we get this concession, Mr. Courtney, I shall move a new clause.

LORD R. CHURCHILL, (Paddington, S.): I should like my hon. and learned Friend to make a concession on this point. I think we may take it for granted that the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite is as authoritative upon the law as the Solicitor General of Ireland.

SIR R. WEBSTER did not reply.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Very well, then; we will go on. My object, Mr. Courtney, is to make a provision such as exists in the Truck Act, 1882, that the Act shall not apply in certain circumstances in Ireland. My clause will be to the effect that the provisions relating to prosecutions and change of venue under the Criminal Law Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, shall not apply to proceedings under this Bill. In Ireland you have two classes of criminals—the Tory and the Nationalist. The Tory is sure to get off. He gets off by this machinery; he has the right under the Crimes Act to ask for a special jury. That is to say, he is entitled to ask for an Orange jury, and having got an Orange jury he is certain of acquittal, or the ground is left open by changing the venue; in the same way as the Walkers were tried in Belfast. Having murdered a policeman, and wounded a second policeman, another man was hanged for it. So far as I am concerned, I shall upon every occasion expose the way in which trials are conducted in Ireland. I would refer to the case of the abominable scoundrels who were acquitted without a stain on their characters in connection with the trial of French and Cornwallis. What is done is this—they are tried by a jury of their own class. Now, take this Bill. If it becomes law—and I rejoice that the noble Lord has nearly passed it—a Poor Law Guardian in

Ireland who has given a contract he ought not to have given, would have a tremendous case made against him. Though, perhaps, the action was hardly worth looking at, it would be brought to Belfast, and it would be trumpeted about that a change of venue had been obtained, and that probably the man would be convicted. It would be regarded as a great case against granting Local Government in Ireland. But if you take the case of Mr. Clement Smith and men of that class, when they have to stand their trial, the change of venue is comfortable; they can ask for special juries, they have the right of challenge, and they have the means of getting off. Unfortunately, secret societies prevail in Ireland—the Orange Society and Freemasons, men belonging to Conservative politics, and a man of their side in politics is certain of acquittal. He can never be convicted. He may commit murder or any other crime, he has no chance of conviction. The machinery which has done this for him is the Crimes Act, which gives him the right to a special jury of his own class. I move this new clause.

New Clause (Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, shall not apply to any trial under this Act)—(*Mr. T. M. Healy*)—brought up, and read the first time:—

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

*Sir R. WEBSTER: I cannot possibly assent to this Clause at the present stage, and I would submit to the hon. and learned Gentleman that it would be very much better to raise the matter on Report.

Lord R. CHURCHILL: I would earnestly appeal to my hon. and learned Friend to consider this Clause, because it is obvious that the provisions of the Crimes Act in Ireland contemplated totally different proceedings than could possibly arise under this Bill. I do implore my hon. and learned Friend to give me what assistance he can in passing this Bill. The Clause of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite is perfectly legitimate in that it provides that exceptional legislation should not be taken to apply to ordinary matters. I earnestly appeal to my hon. and learned Friend not to oppose this Clause, but to let the Bill go through Committee with that Amendment, and then if on Report, if on consideration it was found necessary, it could be struck out.

*Sir H. JAMES: I see the difficulty in which the Attorney General is placed. But I would point out that there may be a case of intimidation under the Crimes Act in Ireland, and, therefore, the object is to take care that the machinery of that enactment shall not be strained to apply to an offence under the Corrupt Practices Act. I think, however, that it is very improbable that there would be any clashing of the two Acts; yet I would join in the appeal made by the noble Lord to the Attorney General. I do not think he would be giving way unduly, because his rights would be preserved. I am sure this Bill ought to pass, and I appeal to the indulgence of the Committee now to allow this matter to be taken, while reserving to the Attorney General the full right of further consideration. If it is found that it is not to be allowed, then it can be struck out on Report.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: I very much regret that it is impossible I can acquiesce. The clause could be inserted in Report as well as struck out. I do not consider it would be right to concede a principle brought forward as it is now.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I should have thought the learned Attorney General for England would have remembered what occurred last year when he refused to take the advice of his right hon. and learned Friend, in the case of a Bill to which he was very much attached, namely, the Criminal Evidence Bill. The hon. Member for Bury tendered him advice upon a point, he refused to take it, and he did not get his Bill.

It being One of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

It being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at five minutes after One o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 4.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MAY 25.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 17*th May*, 1889.

PALATINE COURT OF DURHAM BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the practice and proceedings of the Court of Chancery of the county palatine of Durham—Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 71.)

HARES PRESERVATION BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to provide a close time for hares in England, Scotland, and Wales—Was presented by the Lord Stanley of Alderley; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 72.)

A PUBLIC TRUSTEE AND EXECUTOR.

QUESTION—OBSERVATION.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON, in rising "To inquire of the Lord Chancellor whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce any Bill for the appointment of a Public Trustee and Executor," said: My Lords, there is a Bill, I believe, before your Lordships' House at this moment which deals with the question of disabilities in connection with companies; but that is altogether apart from the subject matter of the question which I desire to put to my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack. I will, if your Lordships will allow me, say but a very few words on the subject. There was some discussion upon it last year in this House, and I think some words passed in another place, and I hope that the answer of my noble and learned Friend to-night may be a favourable one. I will not at any length go into the question of trusteeships, because I think the vast majority of your Lordships who are not Law Lords must be perfectly well aware of the hardships and expense by which a trustee is constantly surrounded. I have felt it myself over and over again, and I have no doubt the majority of those whom I am addressing have had bitter experience of it. It is no answer whatever to the objection that it is in the power of a man to say whether or no he will accept the trusteeship. It constantly happens that for private and domestic reasons that objection is absolutely impossible, and that a man is obliged to accept the trusteeship and with it all the hardships to which I have referred. Besides that, there are certain obvious inconveniences; if the trustee dies it is very difficult sometimes to replace him; if a trustee goes abroad for a very lengthened period, or becomes in some other way incapable of acting, it is expensive and difficult to replace him. All these difficulties would be overcome by the appointment of a Public Trustee. Public Trustees have been appointed in many of our great Colonies with eminent success. I rather think that the first of our Colonies which adopted this practice was New Zealand. I only wish to add one word with regard to expense. I know it is sometimes said that the appointment of a Public Trustee means a considerable expenditure. I cannot myself follow that argument. Of course a certain sum of money is needed to establish such an office, but there would, of course, be a regulated scale of fees for the administration either of a will or a trust, and I should think myself that the public would be well disposed to take advantage of the offer of a Public Trustee, and that before long there would be a very considerable surplus over and above the incidental expenses. But, my Lords, be that as it

may, I am perfectly satisfied that this is a reform to which private individuals look forward with very great interest, and which would meet with almost unanimous welcome. I will not weary your Lordships by going into lengthened argument on the subject, but I would ask my noble Friend, at the same time, whether he proposes to conjoin with any measure for the appointment of a Public Trustee one for the appointment of a Public Executor. I apprehend that all the advantages that can be urged in favour the appointment of a Public Trustee can be equally urged in favour of the appointment of a Public Executor; and that the office of a Public Executor would have this additional advantage, that, as all executorial duties are bound to be wound up within a limited period, it would make it even simpler than the appointment of a Public Trustee. I hope my noble and learned Friend will be able to give me a favourable answer to my question, and that he will be able to state that there will be no long delay in the introduction of this measure. I am quite confident that amongst all the valuable Acts which may be attributed to him there will be none that will command greater public gratitude than the granting of this small reform.

LORD HERSCHELL: Before my noble and learned Friend answers this question, I would like to say one word in support of what the noble Lord opposite (the Earl of Carnarvon) has said. As my noble and learned Friend knows, this is a measure in which I have been long interested and which I have long advocated. I do not believe that it is at all inconsistent with the measure which is now before your Lordships to enable public companies to become trustees. I think there are a great many cases in which, if a Public Trustee existed, those who have to dispose of Trust Funds would sooner put them under the administration of such a company than they would entrust them to a Public Trustee. But there are many cases, on the contrary, where it would be invaluable to the public that there should be a Public Trustee who should give absolute security for the trust money, and that would, on the on the other hand, relieve very many members of the public from the intolerable burden of trusteeship. The truth is—and it is certain that many of your Lordships must have experienced it—it is almost impossible to resist the applications that come to one to act as trustee. The appeal is made—"somebody must act as trustee," and it is in many cases very difficult for anybody to say that he will not do so. According to the decision of the Courts, although an individual trustee can get no profit or advantage or remuneration for anything that he does, nevertheless he is subjected to a far greater burden than people who undertake duties for monetary reward. I say that that is a condition of things which constitutes an intolerable burden, and I am sure it will be a matter of great rejoicing if my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack announces his intention to introduce a measure to deal with this matter.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, it cannot be expected that I should answer the question of the noble Lord in the affirmative without giving some little explanation. I hope that I may very shortly be able to introduce such a Bill as is desired; but upon the question as to the union of the character of Public Trustee and Executor, I will not undertake to say that it is absolutely certain that that can be done. The two questions are very different. Whether the public should undertake the duties of an executor is one thing—quite different from whether they should undertake the duties of a trustee. But with reference to both questions I can only say that the matter is under the anxious consideration of Her Majesty's Government at the present moment. The noble Earl mentioned one of the qualities of a Public Trustee, which I regard as most valuable—namely, his inflexibility. One of the great difficulties which have arisen is the fact that trustees will be good natured and will do what their *cestui que trusts* urge them to do contrary to the trust. The Courts of Law can only decide according to the law, and they must, therefore, if the trusts have not been properly carried out decide accordingly. I think a Public Trustee would not be open to any pressure of the kind. He would look to the terms of the trust, and would absolutely refuse to do anything that was not thereby authorized. That I take to be a circumstance of very great value in favour of a public

trustee. I can only say that as soon as the decision of the Government is arrived at, I will inform my noble and learned Friend here, and I trust the noble Earl will consider that the Bill satisfies his desires.

COUNTY COUNCILS AND THE BOUNDARIES COMMISSIONERS.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

*LORD BELPER, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government whether there was any probability of the Reports from the County Councils on the proposals of the Boundaries Commissioners being received in time to enable the schemes to be laid before Parliament during the present Session, and, if so, what was the latest date at which the Reports should be presented to the Local Government Board, said: My Lords, I need not detain the House more than two minutes in putting the question of which I have given notice, but I think it is a matter of some importance that the various Council Authorities should have an authoritative statement upon this matter. As I understand the proposals of the Boundaries Commissioners have to be submitted to the County Councils for their Report, and such Reports have to be submitted to the Local Government Board, and after the Local Government Board have come to their decision, the scheme will be laid on the Table of the House for a month before being finally adopted by Parliament. I understand that it is the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill with respect to forming District Councils during the present Session of Parliament. It is obvious that if the Bill is passed this Session, and new District Councils are formed in the course of the forthcoming winter, it will be extremely desirable that the new County boundaries should be fixed.

LORD THRING: Before the noble Lord answers the question I would like to ask a question immediately arising out of the matter to which the noble Lord has drawn attention. The noble Lord has referred to the local inquiries made by the Local Government Board. It is of the greatest possible importance in many parts of the country that these local inquiries should be made in the evening, because the working classes are extremely interested in the alteration of the areas, and they are unable to attend except in the evening. It is the practice at present for the Local Government Board to make their inquiries in the middle of the day. I trust that it will be deemed expedient to hold these inquiries in the future in the evening so that the views may be ascertained of the people in whose interests the inquiries are really held.

THE EARL OF POWIS: May I ask the noble Lord who represents the Local Government Board what *locus standi* individual parishes will have to make their representations to the Board as to the decision of the Boundaries Commissioners—I refer to places which are not of a nature to necessitate a local inquiry; and whether the Local Government Board or the Boundaries Commissioners will issue any rules or notices so that every parish may know in what manner the action of the Boundaries Commissioners will affect them?

*LORD BALFOUR: I have to ask the House to allow me to reply to these questions on behalf of the noble Lord who represents the Local Government Board in this House. With regard to the question which the noble Lord opposite has put upon the Paper, I may explain to the House that there are three kinds of alteration of boundary which are covered by his question. There are the alterations of the boundaries of counties; there are the alterations of the boundaries of unions which overlap the boundaries of counties; and there are the alterations of boundaries of boroughs, which are not what are technically called Urban Sanitary Districts. With regard to the latter class of inquiry, that class of boroughs which are not Urban Sanitary Districts, Provisional Orders confirming reports either have been laid on the Table of one or other of the Houses of Parliament, or will be during the present Session of Parliament. With regard to the alteration for boundaries of counties, several applications for local inquiries have been received by the Local Government Board; but looking to the time which must necessarily elapse, considering the intricate nature of the questions involved and the fact that in all cases a local inquiry will be required and that some time will have to be given for the Local Govern-

ment Board to decide upon the merits of the questions at issue. I am afraid it will be impossible to promise that those reports will be received in time to be confirmed by Parliament during the present Session. With regard to the alterations of the boundaries of unions they do not, I understand, require confirmation by Parliament, but are practically under the control of the Local Government Board, and they will be proceeded with, as circumstances allow, with the utmost rapidity possible. I think I have covered the whole of the ground of the question upon the Paper. With regard to the observations of the the noble Lord opposite (Lord Thring), I have to say that I suppose the noble Lord and the House will agree that it is obviously desirable that these inquiries should be held at such times in all cases as are most convenient to the majority of the persons concerned. It has been the practice of the Local Government Board to hold the inquiries under the Allotments Act, which specially are held to concern the working classes in the evening. That is a new departure which was taken with the express purpose of meeting the convenience of the working classes. As regards inquiries such as are alluded to in this question, I have to say that it will not be possible to give any general undertaking that in all cases they will be held in the evening, but if in any particular case it is represented to be more convenient that the inquiry should be held in the evening, if representations are made to the Local Government Board that that course will meet with general approval, the Local Government Board will consider the circumstances, and do what they can to meet the convenience of the majority of the parties concerned. I cannot, however, give a general undertaking that in all cases the inquiries shall be held in the evening, because that might not be suitable to the majority of those concerned. With regard to the question put to me by the noble Lord behind me (the Earl of Powis), I think there are general directions laid down in the Act as to the particular bodies which will have a *locus standi* in these inquiries. It is desirable to get at the truth, and for that purpose considerable latitude will no doubt be given to those who can show a real interest in the matter. I am not able to say whether definite regulations have been, or can be, laid down; but if the noble Lord will confer with me afterwards, I will endeavour to get for him any instructions which have been given.

*LORD BELPER: Perhaps I may be allowed to say one word with regard to the answer of the noble Lord. The point that I wished specially to refer to in my question was with regard to the boundaries of counties where unions overlapped the boundaries of the counties, and where it will be necessary for the Commissioners either to alter the boundaries of the counties, or to alter the boundaries of the union. I would point out to the noble Lord that with respect to those cases, inquiries have been already held, and the result of those inquiries and the reports of the Commissioners have been embodied in a Blue Book presented to your Lordships' House, and those reports have been sent down to the County Councils to report upon. Therefore the position you are in is that you are waiting for the report not of the Local Government Board, but of the County Council. Of course, the Local Government Board will naturally wish to express their opinion as to whether they adopt the report of the County Councils or the report of the Boundaries Commissioners in any case where they differ. In cases where they agree, I daresay the Local Government Board will at once adopt the report, and lay it upon the Table of the House. But my question was particularly directed to the cases in which the two reports differed, and I think it would be well if the noble Lord would give us some information as to the probability of bringing in a Bill this year dealing with the matter.

*LORD BALFOUR: The question of the noble Lord distinctly refers to Reports still to come in. I thought I had sufficiently pointed out that after these Reports were received some little time must necessarily elapse—I hope not long, but still some time—for the Local Government Board to make up their minds upon the merits of the Report transmitted to them. I would also point out that, as the noble Lord is probably well aware, the time for introducing Provisional Orders into Parliament this Session has already expired. If there are requests still to be sent in, and to be considered by the Local Government Board, and these inquiries

to be held, they can only be received so late in the Session that it will probably be most convenient that any proposals that may be submitted to Parliament should be left for confirmation next Session.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I am the last person to wish to interfere needlessly with the Standing Orders, but I want to point out to the noble Lord the great public inconvenience which will result if the county boundaries are not settled as soon as possible. I have no doubt that many of the County Councils have already got their reports ready and can send them in at once. My own County Council has appointed a Committee, which has made its report, and it will be sent up before long in all probability to the Local Government Board. If we are to wait until a Bill passes through Parliament next Session, the County Councils will be put to a very great degree of unnecessary inconvenience. It is a very special case, and one in which I think in both Houses there would be great readiness to dispense with the Standing Orders in order to avoid a public inconvenience of that kind. I would, therefore, venture to urge earnestly upon the noble Lord that he should, if possible, settle this question this year. If the noble Lord will name the last day upon which he will receive the reports of the County Councils, I am sure all the County Councils will endeavour to meet him.

*LORD BALFOUR: I am afraid it is not possible for me to give the promise which the noble Marquess asks for. I am informed that at the present time very few reports have actually come in. A great number are expected, and they must be decided upon some general principle which will govern the large majority of them. Upon this great majority of them there will, I believe, be further inquiry. I should be very sorry if a serious inconvenience should arise, and I will give the noble Marquess this undertaking. The strong protest and request which he has made in this House shall be considered by the Local Government Board. I think the House will see that, having been only asked since I came here to make the answer on behalf of the Local Government to the question on which notice was given, I have done all I could to give all the information in my power.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.

(No. 12.)

Order of the day for the Second Reading, read.

THE EARL OF MOUNT-EDGCUMBE: This is the same Bill which last Session passed through your Lordships' House without a word of opposition or objection from either side, and therefore I do not propose to say anything at this moment in moving that the Bill be now read a second time.

Moved that the Bill be now read 2ª.

*LORD GRIMTHORPE: I was not able to be here when the Bill was passed last year, and it was evident that it would not get through the House of Commons then. At any rate, I wish your Lordships to understand more about the matter than has been stated either last year or now. Last year the promoters of this Bill tried a much larger one for taking away the last £3,000 a year of the Common Fund of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, which is devoted by several Acts of Parliament to the improvement or endowment of poor livings and curacies, and giving it to the Chapter of Truro Cathedral. That was very slightly opposed by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners on Second Reading, and more so by me; and consequently it was referred to a Select Committee, of which the Duke of Richmond was Chairman. It was unanimously rejected there, though no doubt my noble Friend the Lord Steward, and possibly one or two more noble Lords in the Committee, would have voted for it if they had not seen that it was hopeless. After that they carried by a majority of one an abstract vote in favour of robbing Exeter of another £1,000 a year, having already got a fifth canonry, which had been received in 1840, and was transferred to Truro in 1876, and which would otherwise have gone into the Common Fund, solely on the ground that Exeter had not been impoverished by the reduction of rents as most of the other cathedrals have which elected to take land instead of being content with a fixed endowment of then smaller value, which is an odd way of rewarding moderation. However, I need say

no more on that part of the scheme just now. This is undoubtedly a more moderate one, but it equally inserts the wedge and establishes the principle of endowing this one alone of all the six or seven new cathedrals by robbery. I know it will be defended on the ground that the great Cathedral Act of 1840 authorizes the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to found and endow new archdeaconries with £200 a year. But the simple reason is that this is a very old one. And if the Truro Chapter had been quiet they actually had an archdeacon with the better endowment of £333 a year, or a third of the transferred canonry, and I remember that by their own statutes, printed for the last Commission on Cathedrals, the archdeacon is treated as one of the cathedral dignitaries of Truro, although in many cathedrals they are not. Their next step was to get a clause into their second Act, which nobody else cared to meddle with, reducing the future archdeacons of Cornwall to £200 a year, whereby the Chapter Fund got £133 more; but still no Chapter was founded or authorized until £2,400 a year, altogether, should be provided for it by subscriptions. I should add that in both these Acts there was an express prohibition against taking anything from the Common Fund. In 1887 they got another Act through, also not professing to interfere with anybody, nor even reciting, and much less directly repealing those prohibitions, nor even directly founding a Chapter, but simply saying it shall be a body corporate, and ignoring the restrictions of 1878, and dispensing with a dean, by rolling him into the bishop, and, perhaps, wisely; if there is to be a Chapter at all. That Act having got through by its silence about endowments has now been followed by these four attempts to get one at somebody else's expense, and in the face of all the previous legislation. Another feature of it is that not the severance of archdeaconries from canonries, but their annexation, has been the principle both of legislation and episcopal practice since 1840. The Secretary of the Ecclesiastical Commission has given me a list of 19 absolutely annexed archdeaconries, and I have counted 10 more which are so held, besides a few which are annexed to livings, and, considering that the utilization of canons has long been a problem referred with very little success to several Royal Commissions, I will add that the annexation of archdeaconries to them seems, at any rate, a better solution than splitting them off to give an archdeacon no more net income than a curate. Another feature in the case is that these successive attempts are made by almost the only new cathedral which started with any endowment at all, either from its neighbours or the Common Fund. A Durham canonry was also reserved for and given to Newcastle, where also one archdeaconry is endowed by annexation to a canonry, and the other to a living. Southwell had an original endowment of its own which was not augmented but reduced. St. Albans has not a farthing except its old poor rectory endowment; and its archdeaconry endowment was juggled away to Rochester, besides the future value of its Bishop's Palace, though he retains, and will retain, two out of the less than three counties for which that palace was provided. Liverpool and Wakefield have got no more than St. Albans, and in all cases there was an absolute prohibition against even buying a house or securing a site for one out of the Common Fund, however advantageously it might be got. At any rate, before marauding schemes of this kind are sanctioned for this one Cathedral, which has the good fortune to have a Lord Steward for its Lord Lieutenant, the whole subject of the new cathedrals and their genuine wants, but not their luxuries, ought to be investigated. It seems to me a most unlikely way of making the Church, or the Bishops, or the Government, popular, to begin robbing poor livings and curacies to help this new Chapter on to its legs, which was only established by the ingenious device of first aking for no endowment and afterwards coming now, for the fourth time, to try and get some more. Therefore, although I do not expect to succeed here, I move that the Bill be read this day six months.

Amendment moved, to leave out "now" and add at the end of the Motion "this day six months."—(*The Lord Grimthorpe.*)

*THE BISHOP OF LONDON: I cannot say that I have been very much impressed by the arguments of the noble

Lord. I was upon the Select Committee as well as the noble and learned Lord, and my recollection is that so far from its being a case where there was not a single hand held up for the Bill, on the contrary the division in that Committee was 8 upon one side and 7 upon the other.

LORD GRIMTHORPE: If the right rev. Prelate will look at the Report he will see that he is entirely wrong. It was upon another Motion that there was that division of 8 to 7. That was a Resolution not to proceed with the Bill.

*THE BISHOP OF LONDON: The Resolution not to proceed with the Bill was no doubt carried unanimously, because the question had been already settled, but the division which really settled the measure was 8 to 7. Really, the decision upon which the Bill depends was when it was proposed to reject the Bill, and have another Bill upon different lines.

LORD GRIMTHORPE: No; that was after the rejection of the Bill, on another question.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON: But generally I am not contesting the statements of the noble and learned Lord, but I do very much contest the relevancy of his arguments. In the first place, it is quite true that at the time when these bishoprics were first proposed, Parliament very carefully guarded that the money should come from private sources and should not come from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, but I submit that that is a good while ago, and that Parliament then had not the experience which it has now of the result of creating these new bishoprics. Everybody who has studied the matter will agree that the result of the creation of these new bishoprics has been most wonderful in increasing the power of the Church in those parts, and even on the monetary question alone more money has been obtained by the creation of these new bishoprics for the purpose of doing the general work of the Church and augmenting the livings than would have been obtained in any other way that could be named. To say that because the policy of Parliament then was to proceed with very great caution, we ought to be bound by such a policy to refrain from even giving the very small help that is asked for by the diocese of Truro now, I confess, does not seem to me at all reasonable. We must consider what has happened since. We must consider what has been the effect which these new bishoprics have produced. We must consider the stimulating effect of the Cathedral of Truro upon the diocese of Truro, and upon the whole County of Cornwall, and I believe that if you ask the Cornish clergy which in their judgment would be best, whether this £200 a year should go to the augmentation of small benefices in Cornwall, or should go to the improvement of the services in the Cathedral, the enormous majority would support the proposal that it should go to the Cathedral. I, myself, joined in opposing the Bill which proposed to give £3,000 a year to Truro Chapel and Cathedral. I thought it a demand which went beyond all reason, and I did not think that when you weighed one thing against the other, it was really possible that Truro should make such a claim. But it is quite a different thing to give them the small endowment which is now asked for. Will your Lordships allow me to make one further observation? The fifth Canonry was reserved in 1840 or 1841, with a sort of understanding that possibly a Bishopric of Truro might be founded, and that that Canonry might then pass over to Cornwall. Certainly, I myself was rather surprised when the transfer took place to find that it was saddled with what had been put upon it afterwards—namely, the payment of the Archdeaconry. I always thought that the Cathedral of Truro had a claim to the full Canonry independently of the payment of the Archdeaconry, and I cannot look upon the present proposal as being anything more than the fulfilment of the old understanding according to which the Canonry was reserved for Cornwall.

*THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I think the provision that it is proposed to make by this Bill is an entirely fair provision. The case stands thus: The Common Fund of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners has among its other duties the payment of £200 a year to any Archdeaconry which may be created, to which the Commissioners consider that £200 a year should be attached. Such Archdeaconries as have been mentioned as connected with the Cathedrals are in

reality the endowment of a stall. They take nothing away from the Cathedral, but make adequate provision for the duties of a Residentiary Canon as well as for the duties of the Archdeacon, up to an amount not exceeding £1,000 a year, but this particular Archdeaconry takes £200 a year from the one Canonry which belongs to the Cathedral, and it is to be observed that this £200 a year would actually be paid at the present day by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for the endowment of an Archdeaconry, except for a special provision which was made long before any Cathedral, or new bishopric, or endowments of that kind were thought of by Parliament. Then, again, it is to be remembered that part of the sums which go to make up the Common Fund of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, is very largely drawn from Cornwall. There were old estates in Cornwall belonging to the Cathedral which have passed away to the Common Fund. Surely it is not unreasonable that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners should be allowed to pay the £200 a year to the Archdeaconry out of such moneys, in order that this Canonry may belong intact to Truro Cathedral. Truro Cathedral is one which the noble Lord calls luxurious. It is only luxurious in the numbers of its congregations. The endowment of some of the new Cathedrals is undoubtedly large or sufficient, but Truro possesses, from first to last, apart from this one Canonry, £100 a year subject to rates and taxes. That really cannot be considered as a luxurious establishment which strives to keep up, by the voluntary efforts of clergy and laity, what a Cathedral is expected to do. I do think it would be very ungenerous to press a provision made long ago, when there was no such institution in view, to the detriment of an institution, which, as the Bishop of London has said, is doing the best possible work in and for all the parishes of Cornwall.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON: I do not rise for the purpose of making any objection to the Bill now under discussion, but simply to correct my right rev. Friend in his account of the proceedings of the Committee. The Bill which was brought before the Committee was to take £3,500 a year out of the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. That Bill was unanimously rejected. I have the report here. The matter upon which the division was taken was not upon the merits of the Bill, because the first resolution is "That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill." Then the Resolution upon which the division was taken was, "That in the opinion of this Committee any money that may be granted."

On Question whether the word "now" shall stand part of the Motion, resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read 2ª accordingly.

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 17th May, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—THE REV. D. STEPHENS.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it be true that the Rev. Daniel Stephens, recently sentenced by Judge Webb to six months' imprisonment, is at present confined in a flagged cell in Londonderry Gaol; if it be true that the reverend gentleman is bereft of a bed, and sleeps on three planks nailed together; if he be disallowed the use of a razor by the Prison Authorities; if they have forbidden him the use of books, newspapers, pens, and ink; and if the Prison Authorities would allow him to provide any of these himself?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): The General Prisons Board report that the cell in which the Rev. D. Stephens is confined is flagged, but covered with matting. The prisoner, during the first month or probation stage, slept in accordance with the prison rules on an ordinary plank bed, but was supplied with a mattress on the recommendation of the surgeon. On the completion of the probation stage he became entitled to, and was offered, a bedstead. This, however, he refused to accept. The rules do not entitle a prisoner of the class in which he at pre-

sent is to be provided with a razor, or books, newspapers, and writing materials. The Board have no authority to exempt individual prisoners from the rules unless it should be considered necessary on special grounds, which do not appear to exist in the case in question.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Have the Prisons Board considered the propriety of treating all these cases on the same principle, instead of dealing with them separately. Is the hon. and learned Gentleman aware that a razor, as well as books and writing materials, have been supplied in other cases?

MR. MADDEN: I am not aware of that fact.

THE POSTMASTERSHIP OF KILLARNEY.

MR. BLANE asked the Postmaster General, with reference to the vacancy which exists in the postmastership of Killarney, upon what date did the late postmaster cease the active performance of his duties in connection with the office, and how long subsequent was it until the vacancy was officially announced and candidates invited to apply for it; how many applicants responded to this official invitation; what was the cause of the delay that arose from the date of the vacancy arising until this official invitation was issued; what is the reason of the delay in now filling the appointment, and when may it be expected to be officially announced; and, whether he is aware that is generally believed, and if it be a fact, that the appointment was formally conferred before ever an official intimation of the vacancy was published to the service through the usual channel?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the late postmaster of Killarney was granted a pension on the 25th of January last; that the vacancy was announced and candidates were invited on the 12th of March, the announcement having been withheld until that date so as not to interfere with other similar announcements which had to take precedence; that the number of candidates was 46; that the appointment has been filled, and that there has been no undue delay in filling it; and that as to the general belief to which the hon. Member refers, it is, as such beliefs so often are, without the slightest foundation.

SUBMARINE TELEGRAMS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what amount was expended during the year ended 31st March, 1889, on submarine telegrams from England by the various Departments of the Government, including the Army and Navy, the Foreign Office, Diplomatic and Consular Services, the Colonial Office, and by the India Office; the amount paid by the British Government for telegraph cable subsidies; whether he is aware that the Australasian Governments pay subsidies to the amount of £32,000 a year for telegraph cables to England; whether England contributes anything towards this expenditure; and whether he will consider the advisability of appointing a Commission to consider and report on the whole question of telegraphic communication between England and the various parts of the Empire?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I have found some difficulty in obtaining the information for which the hon. Member asks, as telegrams sent from Government Departments to foreign countries do not necessarily pass through the Post Office. Roughly speaking, the total cost of such telegrams in 1888-9 was something under £16,000. Last year's Votes show that subsidies amounting to £49,000 net were paid by the Imperial Exchequer to submarine telegraph companies. I understand that the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company has laid two cables to Australia. The one which was laid first is unsubsidized, but the Australian Colonies pay an annual subsidy of £32,400 for the second. No contribution is made from Imperial finances. I am not prepared to consider the advisability of appointing such a Commission as the hon. Member suggests.

IRELAND—CHARGE AGAINST AN EMERGENCY MAN.

MR. BLANE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention had been called to the fact that, on Saturday, 11th May, an emergency man named John Girvan

fired three shots from a revolver at Sergeant Mortimer and Constable M'Govern near Portadown, county Armagh, and was arrested and lodged in Ballynary police barrack, and brought before Dr. Magennis, J.P., of Lurgan; if Girvan is still at large, after firing on the police sent to protect him; and if the Attorney General will make inquiry with reference to the transaction?

MR. MADDEN: The Constabulary report that the man was arrested by the police and brought before the Magistrate on the following morning. The case will be dealt with at the Petty Sessions Court on Monday next. The charge against the man is that he was intoxicated and discharged a revolver.

MR. SEXTON: (Belfast, W.): Is he an emergency man?

MR. MADDEN: I am not aware.

MILITIA ADJUTANTS.

MR. BLANE asked the Financial Secretary for War if it be intended to adhere to the present regulation with regard to the appointment of adjutants to the Militia, by which an experienced officer of the Regular Army not below the rank of captain should fill the post; and if a strong effort will be made to fill the existing vacancies in such an important office before the annual training this summer.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): It is not proposed to alter the existing rule for the appointment of adjutants to the Militia. There are always ample candidates as regards the infantry, and though in the Artillery Militia there is more difficulty in obtaining suitable officers, it is expected that the two vacancies now existing will very shortly be filled.

THE METROPOLITAN TELEGRAPHISTS.

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Postmaster General whether he has received a petition signed by 252 Metropolitan district telegraphists pointing out the existing stagnation and asking for an improvement in their future prospects, and whether he is prepared to make such recommendations as will meet the justice of their case, and thereby remove the cause of the grave discontent which at present exists.

*MR. RAIKES: I have received the petition referred to, and am carefully examining the question, which presents considerable difficulty. I have not yet come to a decision.

IRELAND—THE GAELIC ASSOCIATION.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has seen a report of proceedings at Clonmel, under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act, on Wednesday, 8th inst., at which it appears that Mr. Bolton, Crown Solicitor, in his address to the Court said:—

"The defendants were charged with riot, which originated in their taking part in a meeting of the Gaelic Association, which, it was well known, was a thoroughly illegal association, so much so that Mr. Parnell was now endeavouring to dissociate himself from it."

If he can state on what authority Mr. Bolton made this statement, that the society was an illegal body; and, will Mr. Bolton be called upon to explain the above-mentioned statement?

*MR. MADDEN: Mr. Bolton reports that the statement attributed to him in the first paragraph of the question is substantially correct. I am informed that the members of the association referred to, who were convicted of riot on the occasion when Mr. Bolton made the statement in question, have appealed, and this being so, I cannot enter into a discussion of any statement made on the part of the prosecution.

MR. FLYNN: The statement of Mr. Bolton had nothing to do with the charge, but I will ask if that gentleman is entitled to characterize an association extending all over the country as an illegal association?

*MR. MADDEN: I cannot add to what I have already stated, having regard to the fact that the case is one in which there is an appeal pending.

MR. FLYNN: Then I will call attention to the matter later on.

THE SALVATION ARMY.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is the case that five men, members of the Salvation Army, were taken through Dorking handcuffed, together with a man who had been stealing sheepskins, on Saturday, May 4th, for conveyance to Wandsworth Gaol, for causing an obstruction in the street;

whether there was any question as to the willingness of these men to go to prison, inasmuch as having had the option of a fine they deliberately chose to go to prison instead; and, what was the ground of their being thus handcuffed?

*The UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam) said he had nothing to add to the statement made on the subject by the Home Secretary yesterday in reply to the question of the hon. Member for South Manchester. It did not appear from the letter of the Chief Constable that the men were unwilling to go to prison, but the Superintendent thought it prudent to handcuff them in consequence of the excitement which prevailed in the streets where a considerable crowd had collected.

IRELAND—EVICTION IN CORK.

DR KENNY (Cork, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he was aware that Patrick Donovan, of Castleventry, Rosscarberry, county Cork, was recently evicted from his farm; that since Donovan's eviction the farm has been in charge of an emergncy man guarded by two policemen; that on the morning of Tuesday the 2nd instant the emergency man in charge left Donovan's farm with his police guard; that the latter returned that evening without the emergency man, or any substitute for him, and took sole charge of farm till the night of Thursday, the 4th instant, when they were relieved by two other policemen, who then remained in sole charge till the night of Friday, the 5th instant, when an emergency man, guarded as before by two yolicemen, was again placed in charge of farm; whether it is the custom to allow policemen to take sole charge of evicted farms, as in this case; and, whether he will inquire into the matter; and, if he finds the facts are as above stated, he will give directions that policemen shall not in future be so employed?

*MR. MADDEN: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone the question.

TELEGRAPH CLERKS AT RACE MEETINGS.

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN (Lambeth, Brixton) asked the Postmaster General whether it is a fact that telegraph clerks were recently drawn from York, Leeds, Liverpool, Sheffield, Manchester, and Birmingham, to perform duty at Epsom, Sandown Park, and Newmarket race meetings, whether the staffs required for such meetings could have been supplied from London, thus effecting considerable economy in railway fares and subsistence allowances; and, whether the saving thereby effected in such cases would have provided means for the promotion of officers who are waiting at the head of a lower class, and yet are performing the same duties as are performed by clerks in a higher class?

*MR. RAIKES: In reply to my noble Friend, I have to say that for the races of the 23rd and 24th April, 3 telegraphists were sent to Epsom from Birmingham, 3 from Manchester, 1 from York, 1 from Leeds, and 27 from London. For the races of the 25th and 26th and 27th, the 8 provincial telegraphists proceeded from Epsom to Sandown Park, and 13 London telegraphists were employed. At Newmarket, from the 29th April to the 3rd May, the same 8 provincial officers were employed, in addition to 2 from Leeds, 2 from Sheffield, 3 from Liverpool, and 20 from London. The whole of the staff required at these meetings could not have been supplied from London, and no more economical or efficient arrangement was feasible. I need hardly explain to my noble Friend that even had a saving been practical it could not have been applied in any manner affecting promotion.

THE INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

MR. PATRICK JOSEPH O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware of the great discontent existing in the Inland Revenue Department of the Civil Service, owing to the almost complete stoppage of promotion, arising out of the retention in that Department of aged Collectors, Supervisors, and other superior officials; and also owing to the fact that vacancies in the superior ranks are not filled as they occur; and, if so, whether he will cause such steps to be taken as may remove this discontent complained of?

MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member's question is practically a repetition of one addressed to me some time ago by the hon. Member for Westmeath (South), and I have nothing to add to the answer which I then gave. I am not aware that there is great discontent in the Inland Revenue Department. It is true that promotion is somewhat slack, owing to the abnormal extent of promotion which occurred some time ago. The aged supervisors, collectors and others to whom the hon. Member refers are still very efficient officers, and to compel them to retire would run dead against the repeatedly expressed desire of this House to keep down the pension list and discourage the retirement of men still capable of rendering good service. As for delays in filling up vacancies, they are due, when they do occur, to the necessity of making inquiries as to the fitness of candidates for promotion.

IEELAND.—EVICTIONS ON THE PONSONBY ESTATE.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if it is true that a force of 100 police constables and an equal number of soldiers was employed in the eviction of William Forrest and Edmond Lynch, tenants on the Ponsonby Estate, on the 8th instant; what was the cost of the operation; whether it is a fact that at the very time of the eviction, or immediately before, negotiations were being carried on between the landlord and the tenants on the estate for the purchase of their holdings by the latter, but were broken off owing to the interference of a London syndicate; whether he is aware that Mr. Horace Townsend, the agent of the honourable Member for South Huntingdon, declared that it was the intention of this syndicate to clear the tenants off this property; whether 37 tenants, or thereabouts, remain to be evicted; whether they have made several efforts to settle with the landlord on the best terms they can honestly offer; whether the forces of the Crown will be placed at the disposal of the London syndicate to evict tenants who are anxious and willing to purchase; and, whether he can give any estimate of the cost of such an operation?

MR. MADDEN: I must ask the hon. Member to postpone the question.

COMPLAINT AGAINST THE POLICE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the following passage from the summing up of Judge Homersham Cox, in an action tried before him on Wednesday, in which the jury awarded to the plaintiff £15 damages for injuries sustained through being struck with a truncheon by a constable, who pleaded in defence that he was compelled to use his truncheon to clear a disorderly crowd after it had declined to make way:—

"There is not a tittle of justification for the assault. The constable had no more right to strike a man than I have. I have a right to strike a man in self-defence, and a constable has the same right, and no greater, unless the Riot Act has been read;"

And, whether he will direct the special attention of the Commissioners of Metropolitan Police to the law upon this subject?

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: The attention of the Secretary of State has been drawn to this matter. The duties of the police with regard to the use of their truncheons are clearly defined in police orders, which are to the effect that the truncheons are supplied to the police to enable them to protect themselves if violently attacked. If a constable is likely to be overpowered he may draw his truncheon and use it, taking care to avoid striking anyone on the head. The arms and legs should be aimed at to disable a prisoner, as parts of his frame least likely to suffer injury. The use of the truncheon is not to be resorted to except in extreme cases when all other attempts have failed, and a prisoner is likely to escape through the constable being ill-used and overpowered.

MR. J. STUART: What are the Police Orders which the right hon. Gentleman has read? Are they in the possession of the House or the public?

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: No; but I am perfectly willing to show the hon. Member the text of this order. I believe that orders are published from time to time as they are made.

MR. J. STUART: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to lay on the Table the Police Orders which he has just read. It is very difficult to obtain a copy of them.

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: If the hon. Gentleman will move for a copy of the Paper which I read he can do so, but it is a question as to whether the country should be put to the expense of printing a Return after the publicity I have given to the order.

MR. J. STUART: Then I beg to give notice that I will move for the whole of the document which has been quoted by the hon. Gentleman.

MR. COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe): I believe that the Justice Regulations are published in the Police Code, edited by the hon. Member for the Central Division of Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent).

MR. J. STUART: I should like to see them.

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: I will inquire into the matter.

MR. FLYNN: Does it contain a copy of the Police Regulations for Ireland?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE INVERNESS EDUCATIONAL TRUST.

MR. ANGUS SUTHERLAND (Sutherlandshire) asked the Lord Advocate whether the Scotch Education Department has passed the Report of the Factor and Treasurer of the Inverness Educational Trust, dated 19th February last, to the Governors of the Trust and the Directors of the Inverness Academy; whether, in that Report, it is admitted that the directors have failed to carry out that portion of the scheme approved by the Education Department which provided for the creation of bursaries and scholarships; whether the scheme was only allowed to pass without opposition on account of this provision being inserted; whether the directors have alleged that it is the want of funds that has prevented the establishment of such bursaries and scholarships; and, whether, since the Report contained the following statement—

"The following Balances are not yet taken over, and are under the consideration of the Scotch Education Department, viz.: Balance due to Caledonian Bank, £1,473 5s. 9d.; Ditto due by late Factor, £1,086 19s. 9d."

The Scotch Education Department will take immediate steps to make the said balance available for the purposes of the scheme.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): The Report referred to has not been transmitted to the Scotch Education Department, and the Department have no knowledge of its contents. The scheme in question was not allowed to pass without opposition, as it was discussed in Parliament, and my Lords cannot say whether such opposition was modified on account of any particular provision inserted in it. The accounts of the governing body down to the 31st December, 1888, have been examined by the Auditor under direction of the Department, and it appears that want of funds has so far prevented the establishment of bursaries and scholarships. Attention has been drawn to the balance due by the factor of the former trustees; but the present governing body state that they have been advised by counsel that they are not in a position to take legal steps to recover this sum from the late trustees, to whom the factor was responsible.

IRELAND—PRISON TREATMENT OF MR. CAREW, M.P.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, after Mr. Carew, M.P., at the instance of the medical member of the Irish Prisons Board, had been allowed the use of writing materials, and had availed himself of this facility to prepare a statement of his evidence to be given before the Special Commission, it was intimated to him that no statement could be delivered to his solicitor until after it had been read by the Governor of the Gaol in which Mr. Carew is imprisoned; and, whether Mr. Carew is not to be allowed to prepare for his defence except under the supervision of the gaol official. I also wish to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman if he is aware that the visiting justices when they saw Mr. Carew yesterday found him pale, thin and haggard; that his appetite had practically gone, and that he had ceased to take exercise—in fact, that his health is so extremely bad that the worst fears are entertained?

MR. MADDEN: I have not received any information upon these matters,

and I must ask the right hon Gentleman to postpone the question.

MR. SEXTON: I will repeat both questions on Monday.

IRISH BILLS.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can now state the day when he proposes to introduce the Irish Drainage and Railway Bills?

MR. MADDEN: My right hon. Friend hopes to be able to introduce a Bill in the course of next week.

MR. FLYNN: Shall we have a few days' notice of its introduction?

MR. MADDEN: I think that is a question I must leave to the Leader of the House.

THE *SULTAN.*

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether any, and what, steps are being taken to raise the *Sultan.*

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The Salvage Company on the spot, who were employed by the Admiralty after the vessel struck, do not believe that she can be raised and the naval and dockyard officers at Malta corroborate this view. A London Salvage Company have offered to undertake to raise her, but we cannot assent to their terms. Orders will therefore be sent to the Commander-in-Chief to remove what fittings and guns he can. This will necessitate the blowing up of the upper deck of the *Sultan.*

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Will the noble Lord state whether any Report will be laid on the Table as to the means taken to try to save the *Sultan* after she struck?

LORD G. HAMILTON: It is proposed to have an inquiry into that matter, but the investigation must be postponed until the Duke of Edinburgh has become sufficiently convalescent to enable him to be present?

MR. ISAACSON: What were the terms of the Salvage Company's offer?

LORD G. HAMILTON: What they offered was this, that if they failed the Admiralty should bear a certain portion of the expense, and that if they succeeded, they should be paid an inordinate reward.

INDIAN PENSIONS.—UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if he will state the date on which the first pension payable in England was granted to any Indian Uncovenanted Civil Servant; also the total amount and total number of such pensions now payable in England, showing how many are for £200 a-year and under; how many above £200, but less than £300 a year; how many above £300, but less than £400 a year; and how many over £400?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The first pension payable in England to uncovenanted civil servants was granted in 1815. There are fifteen pensions payable in sterling amounting to £6,660. Of these two are for £200 or under; three between £200 and £300; three between £300 and £400; seven above £400. There are also 380 payable in rupees, amounting to Rs. 1,156,177. Of these 162 are for Rs. 2,000 or under; 53 between Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 3,000; 73 between Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 4,000; 92 above Rs. 4,000.

SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: Arising out of the answer of my hon. Friend, is the House to understand that the first series of pensions named by my hon. Friend are payable in sterling to uncovenanted servants residing in India?

SIR J. GORST: Yes, Sir.

IRELAND—THE TROOPS IN DONEGAL.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War whether he will be prepared to sanction the granting of special allowances to the troops that have been employed during the last few months in aid of the Civil Power in the county of Donegal?

MR. BRODRICK: The troops in question have had an additional meat ration. No further special allowance is contemplated.

DISSATISFACTION IN UPPER BURMAH.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that serious and widespread dissatisfaction now exists in Upper Burmah; whether complaints have reached him that the introduction of the British

Indian system of taxation has caused widespread misery among the rural populations; whether the Administration has monopolized the trade in rubies, in which thousands of the citizens of Mandalay previously obtained subsidence; whether a heavy per centage has been levied upon the proceeds of cultivation; whether persons in possession of lands under rights recognized by the previous Government have been ousted, and the lands claimed as Government property; and whether, in view of the existing distress and misery in Burmah, the Secretary of State will direct inquiry to be made as to the remedial measures to be undertaken?

SIR J. GORST: The answer to the first question is in the negative. The Indian system of taxation has only been extended to Upper Burmah in respect of stamps, salt, excise, and income tax; and that in only a modified form. The Ruby Mines were a Government monopoly before the conquest of Upper Burmah. A few of the citizens of Mandalay may have profited by a contraband traffic in rubies which the Government are doing their best to stop. There is no land tax except on Royal lands, always recognized as Government property, and forming less than one-sixth of the cultivated area. The Secretary of State does not at present see any grounds for the inquiry suggested.

MR. BRADLAUGH: With regard to the first paragraph of the hon. Gentleman's answer, is the Secretary of State unaware that any dissatisfaction exists in Upper Burmah, or is the reply limited to the description of the dissatisfaction? If the Secretary of State has any knowledge of the existence of dissatisfaction in Upper Burmah, how would he describe such dissatisfaction?

SIR J. GORST: When the Secretary of State directs me to answer a question, he naturally desires me to answer the question put on the Paper. What the hon. Member asked was whether there was serious and widespread dissatisfaction now existing in Upper Burmah, and I replied that the Secretary of State has never heard of any such dissatisfaction. But with regard to the question the hon. Member now puts, I should be astonished to find a country in any part of the world in which some dissatisfaction with the Government does not exist.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Does the hon. Gentleman know that the principal English papers in Burmah state that serious and widespread dissatisfaction exists?

SIR J. GORST: No, Sir.

THE BROUGHALL CHARITY ESTATE.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) asked the honourable Member for the Penrith Division (Mr. J. W. Lowther) if the Charity Commissioners are aware that the trustees of the Broughall Charity Estate, in Shropshire, decline to offer the land in allotments, as required by the Allotment Act of 1882, though repeated applications have been made for the land by the labourers of the parish; whether the land is at present unlet; and, whether the Charity Commissioners will take steps to compel the trustees to carry out the provisions of the above Act?

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The Commissioners are aware that application has been made to the trustees by the labourers on the Broughall Charity Estate. The Commissioners have themselves addressed several communications to Mr. H. Lee, the sole surviving trustee, on the subject, which have hitherto remained unanswered. The last tenant of the land gave up possession at Christmas last, and the Commissioners have no knowledge of the land having been re-let. The Commissioners have fully explained to the labourers the precise steps necessary to be taken by them to enable the Commissioners to exercise their powers under the 10th Section of the Allotments Extension Act, 1882.

MR. COLLINGS: Is the hon. Member aware that the trustees some months ago promised the labourers in writing that they should have these allotments, but have since taken no steps whatever to provide them?

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: No, Sir; I am not aware that any such promise was made to the labourers. The Act of Parliament says that certain proceedings shall be taken, where the trustees have failed to carry out the Act, and those proceedings and no other can be taken, if there has been any failure on the part of the trustees. The Commissioners some time ago fully informed the labourers as to the manner in which

to put the machinery in motion, and they are perfectly willing to carry out the Act.

INDIA—OUTRAGES UPON COOLIES.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the cases of outrage alleged to have been perpetrated upon coolies by planters, which are set forth in the following extracts from the Report of the Indian Association and the proceedings of the Bengal Provincial Conference held in October, 1888—

"The next mode of punishment which is sometimes resorted to is the lock-up. In 1884 two officers of the Dum-Duma tea estate in the district of Dibrugurh, named Babus Kedar Nath Ghosh and Lasadhar Barua, were charged with the offence of keeping a man under illegal restraint, and in this case the existence of a dungeon in many tea gardens was proved by the witnesses for the defence. The Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Greenshield, who tried the case, expressed, in his judgment, great surprise and strong disapproval of such conduct on the part of the planters."

In December, 1886, the following telegram appeared in the newspapers—

"Having been systematically maltreated, some 110 coolies, men and women, came in a body on the 9th inst. from the Rajabarie tea garden, and made complaints. Lieutenant Gurdon has found some of the serious charges to be correct—namely, the existence of a dungeon, where absconders and other recalcitrant coolies are confined and tied down with ropes. The manager, Mr. Eyre, admitted having the dungeon and having cut a coolie with a cane. Several telegrams were lately received from Dibrugurh, stating that about 200 men and women were severely caned on their buttocks by one Mr. Anding, the assistant manager of the Misijan tea garden, and four of them died from the effects of it. Mr. Anding, the cruel perpetrator of these misdeeds, had been sent to prison for three months and had been fined Rs.250. Such instances are not rare."

And whether the Government will take any action in the matter?

SIR J. GORST: The Secretary of State has no reason to believe that outrages upon coolies in Assam by planters are common, or that the few cases which occur are not adequately punished under the existing law. The first case referred to in the question happened five and the second two and a half years ago. There is no information in the possession of the Secretary of State as to these cases. But as regards the case of Anding, which happened in September, 1888, the offender was tried and convicted on three charges, and was sentenced on the first to rigorous imprisonment for three months and a fine of 250 rupees; on the second to rigorous imprisonment for ten days and a fine of 100 rupees; and on the third to rigorous imprisonment for six months and a fine of 100 rupees. Compensation was given to the complainants. There is no foundation for the statement that any persons have died from the effect of outrages. The whole question of the coolie emigration to Assam is at the present time under the special consideration of the Government of India.

MR. BRADLAUGH: In view of the fact that these unfortunate people are utterly unable to represent themselves, will the hon. Gentleman see that special attention is directed to their complaints, and that steps are taken to remedy them?

SIR J. GORST: Certainly, Sir; special attention has been directed to that part of the inquiry, and the Secretary of State has been officially informed that the First Commissioner of Assam is engaged in investigating the condition of the tea gardens.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

MR. JAMES STUART asked the President of the Local Government Board whether he is now prepared to propose such Amendments of the Standing Orders of the House relating to private Bills as shall secure that, where houses suitable for the accommodation of at least 20 families of the working classes are to be pulled down, or otherwise rendered unfit for habitation in any parish, provision shall be made for the erection of suitable dwellings instead of them, and that provision shall be made that the houses shall not be pulled down at a greater rate than the new ones are erected; and that the latter, when erected, shall continue to be available for the purposes of the dwellings of the working classes for a reasonable time?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The hon. Member is no doubt aware of the terms of the clauses which are now introduced into private Bills in pursuance of the Standing Orders with regard to the accommodation to be provided for persons displaced by the de-

molition of houses. I have received no representations that these provisions are insufficient for the purposes contemplated by Parliament. With regard to parishes in the Metropolis, the clauses apply whenever 20 or more houses occupied by persons of the labouring class are proposed to be demolished. In districts outside the Metropolis they apply when the number is ten or more, and I cannot but think that the test should continue to be the number of houses and not the number of families who occupy the houses. The term "family" is by no means easy of definition. As regards the other matters referred to, they are already provided for by the clauses introduced in the Bills.

IRELAND — PRISON TREATMENT OF MR. E. HARRINGTON, M.P.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Solicitor General for Ireland is it true that the result of the Lord Lieutenant's clemency to Mr. Edward Harrington, M.P., in remitting, after the first three months, the sentence of hard labour for the remaining three months of his sentence, was to deprive him of four ounces of brown bread and half a pint of milk per diem?

*MR. MADDEN: I beg to refer the hon. and learned Gentleman to the reply given to a similar question put by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) on the 11th of April, in which my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary fully stated the facts of the case, and the conditions of convict labour.

DISTRICT INSPECTOR MARKHAM.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Solicitor General for Ireland, whether the evidence on which District Inspector Markham was convicted of cowardice for not arresting Father M'Fadden prior to the murder of District Inspector Martin will be published or made accessible to Members of the House?

*MR. MADDEN: The Inspector General reports that one of the charges which was investigated was for cowardly behaviour, but in reviewing the case he did not consider the evidence sufficient to support the charge; but that failure in duty was proved. As explained in reply to a question on this subject yesterday, the inquiry having been a departmental one, it would be contrary to custom to lay upon the Table or otherwise publish the papers in the case.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Why should not hon. Members have reasonable access to evidence which has been published in the newspapers? I am told that the evidence has already been given in the *Derry Journal* of Wednesday last, and if that is so, why should it not also be laid upon the Table of this House?

MR. MADDEN: I am not aware that that is the case. I have made inquiry, but have not yet received a reply. If, however, it is the case, there will be less difficulty in the way of hon. Members, and the suggestion of the right hon Gentleman will be considered.

MR. J. MORLEY: I must really ask the Chief Secretary to consider the propriety of giving hon. Members reasonable access to the evidence. To tell hon. Members to procure a copy of the *Derry Journal* is not giving them reasonable access to the evidence.

MR. MADDEN: The suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman will be considered.

MR. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): The hon. and learned Gentleman says that it is contrary to precedent to give the result of a departmental inquiry. That may be so, but the assumption is founded on the principle that the inquiry is essentially a secret one. As the proceedings at this inquiry have already been published, the argument of secrecy disappears, and Members of Parliament asking for information of this character ought not to be told that they may order the newspaper in which it appears.

MR. MADDEN: All the considerations to which the right hon. Gentleman has called my attention will be borne in mind if the fact is that the inquiry was open to the public. What I said was that it would be contrary to precedent to lay on the Table the evidence given in a departmental inquiry unless there were special circumstances in the case.

MR. T. M. HEALY: We want not merely the Report of the Gentleman who conducted the inquiry, but the evidence which was given. We do not care a button for the Report.

THE BATTERING RAM.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Constabulary Authorities will be specially directed to the provisions of Section 7 of "The Evicted Poor Protection Act, 1848," which provides that whosoever with intent to dispossess any person actually dwelling in a house or other building, shall, except so far as may be necessary to enable the Sheriff or his officer, to effect an entrance thereto, pull down, demolish, or unroof in whole or in part such house whilst such person, or any of his family, shall be actually within the same, shall be guilty of a misdemeanour; whether most of the evictions carried out by the battering ram are not by the "Sheriff or his officer," but by a special bailiff; and, whether Judge Johnson's observations at last Assizes on this practice have led in any way to its being modified?

MR. MADDEN: The Inspector General reports that there is nothing in the instructions given to the Constabulary which is not in harmony with the provisions of the Act quoted. Evictions are generally carried out by the Sheriff or his officer, though some cases have occurred in which the execution of the writ is committed to a special bailiff. This, however, is done under express statutable authority, and there is no reason why protection should not be given in such cases. The matter referred to in the concluding paragraph of the hon. and learned Member's question is not within the control of the Government, and I am not in a position to state to what extent the recommendations of the learned Judge have been adopted.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Mr. Justice Johnson, a gentleman who was formerly in this House, has denounced the practice of entrusting the execution of process of this nature to bailiffs, or, in other words, to emergency men, and the Government have Mr. Justice Johnson's remarks before them. Sheriff's officers have never used petroleum or the battering-ram, and my question is whether the Government will see that in future police protection is not given to irregular emergencies. The Sheriff or his officers are entitled to the protection of the law, and they are the only officers of the law upon whom the duty of carrying out evictions devolves.

*MR. MADDEN: The hon. and learned Gentleman is aware that down to 1887 the eviction of a caretaker could not be carried out by the Sheriff or his officer, not only by a special bailiff. The Act of 1887 gave the landlord the option of entrusting the work to the Sheriff, but he can lawfully employ a special bailiff, and it would be exceedingly wrong if the Government refused to give police protection to those whom he may employ in the execution of this duty.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Has the attention of the hon. and learned Gentleman been called to a statement made by the Lord Chancellor in the House of Lords, that when a legal decision has been given it is the duty of those concerned in the administration of the law to obey it. In this case we have the declaration of Mr. Justice Johnson, that the writs ought not to be executed in this particular manner, but that they ought to be entrusted "to the Sheriff or his officer." Will the Government see then that police protection is not given to irregular emissaries?

*MR. MADDEN: The Act of 1887 gives the landlord an option as to whom he shall employ, and the employment of special bailiffs is not illegal.

MR. T. M. HEALY: On the Constabulary Vote I will call attention to the system adopted by the Government of giving police protection to persons with petroleum cans in their hands, which they employ in burning down the houses of the tenants—such persons not being Sheriff's officers.

THE ALLOTMENTS ACT, 1882..

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked the hon. Member for Penrith whether he is aware that there is certain charity land, in the parish of Weedon, which is subject to "The Allotments Act, 1882," and now in the occupation of Mr. Samuel Hadland; whether Mr. Hadland is trustee of the land as well as the tenant, and declines to give up possession, though repeated applications for allotments have been made to him by labourers and others in the parish; and whether the Charity Commissioners will take immediate steps to enforce the provisions of the above Act?

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: The poor's land in the parish of Weedon is subject to the Allotments Act, 1882, and is now in the occupation of Mr. Samuel Hadland. The Commissioners are not at present aware that Mr. Samuel Hadland is trustee of the land, but inquiry upon this point has been made. The attention of the trustees was called to the provisions of the Act in December last by the Charity Commissioners, and in consequence thereof notice was published in accordance with the 4th Section of the Act, but so far as the Commissioners are aware, no applications from labourers have been received by the trustees. But again upon this point I will direct inquiry to be made.

ADMIRALTY AND WAR OFFICE CONTRACTS—SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS.

MR. BERNARD COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether certain firms in London have received for many years, and are still receiving, large orders from the Government Departments (Navy and Army) for surgical instruments, appliances, &c.; whether he is aware that these firms do not manufacture three-fourths of such goods, but that they are all made by manufacturers in Sheffield and elsewhere, who stamp on the goods the names of the firms from whom the Government purchase; whether he is aware that the published price lists of these firms from which the Government purchase are 25 per cent higher than those of other firms in Sheffield, London, and elsewhere, who supply goods of exactly the same quality and finish; and whether he is aware that the Admiralty and War Office refuse to allow other firms to tender and assign no reason for such refusal, and what is the reason for such refusal?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Surgical instruments and appliances for Navy use are obtained under contract with a London firm of surgical instrument makers, who secured it after competition with other leading firms of high reputation, to whom it is strictly limited. The principal and most important items in the Schedule are the cutting instruments for which London has always held a very high position. All these articles and many others are manufactured by the contractors in London, but it is fully recognized that many items in the Schedule are not made by them, nor by any other firm of instrument makers. With regard to the price lists, the Admiralty does not buy on price list quotations, but to special patterns and prices. It is not customary, nor is it desirable on obvious grounds, to assign reasons for declining to permit a firm to tender. Every application is carefully considered and dealt with on its merits.

MR. COLERIDGE: Are the contracts to which the noble Lord has referred contracts in writing.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I believe they are.

IRELAND—PRISON TREATMENT OF MR. J. O'CONNOR, M.P.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask the Solicitor General for Ireland if it is the fact that the hon. Member for South Tipperary has been required to clean out his prison cell?

MR. MADDEN: I have no information to that effect.

THE CLOSURE.

MR. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to two occasions recently on which the operation of the closure has had the effect of not merely closing the discussion, but of excluding from the consideration of the House amendments which had not been moved; and whether he will take into consideration the desirability of altering the rules so as to remedy such an inconvenience?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It must be obvious to the hon. and learned Gentleman that I am not in a position to give an answer to a question of this character without consideration. I am under the impression that, on the whole, the exercise of the right which belongs to all hon. Members of this House to claim that the closure shall be put, has been for the convenience of the House, and has been accepted on the part of the great majority of the House as being in accordance with the views of that majority. The very large majority which voted last night in favour of the closure confirms that view; but I will take the question into the most serious consideration, and, if necessary, ask the House to consider it.

EXTENSION OF PENNY POSTAGE.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will give facilities during the present Session for the discussion of a Resolution for the extension of penny postage to the various parts of the British Empire and to America, in order to fittingly celebrate the jubilee of penny postage in Great Britain and Ireland?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: My hon. Friend must expect the answer I am about to give, that it is not in my power to offer the facilities which he desires.

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now state definitely when the Local Government (Scotland) Bill will be taken?

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeenshire, E.): Perhaps it will be convenient if the right hon. Gentleman will also say whether the Scotch Universities Bill will be taken before Whitsuntide.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: We hope to dispose of the important business now before the House—the Budget Bill and the Naval Defence Bill—on Monday next, and under these circumstances we hope to take the Local Government (Scotland) Bill on Thursday, and, as I stated to the House, to proceed with it as far as possible from day to day. As soon as that Bill is read a second time, I hope it may be possible to obtain a Second Reading for the Scotch Universities Bill before the Whitsuntide Recess.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is there any intention of introducing on an early day the Irish measures which were referred to in the Queen's Speech?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It is the hope of the Chief Secretary to introduce a Drainage Bill in the course of next week. I am not able to say when a Land Bill may be brought in.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION BILL.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I desire to put a question in reference to the Sugar Convention Bill. The Bill was originally put down for the 16th of this month, and then a Motion was made late at night, without any notice, for the postponement until, I believe, the 20th of June. I will ask the First Lord of the Treasury to take care that in future, on an important question of this kind, when a Motion of postponement is made, hon. Members shall have an opportunity of making observations upon it, or of opposing it if they so desire. In this matter Members were taken by surprise.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am very sorry if the right hon. Gentleman has lost an opportunity of which he wished to avail himself, but I had given a distinct notice that the Bill would not be taken until after Whitsuntide, and the postponement until after Whitsuntide, but not very long after, was put from the Chair in the ordinary course. I will consider in the case of important Bills whether a distinction can be drawn.

*MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade pledged the Government to a particular date, and it was on the distinct understanding that we were carrying out the suggestion of the First Lord of the Treasury that the proposal was accepted by the House.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: That is really what we understand. The Government had distinctly announced that the postponement would be until after Whitsuntide, but only to a very short time after Whitsuntide.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman exactly appreciates the ground of our complaint. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman said he would postpone the Bill until after Whitsuntide, but what we on this side desired was to have an opportunity of protesting against that postponement.

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not wish to make any charge on this occasion, but I think that on future occasions when great importance is attached to the question of postponement, the Motion should not be taken without full notice.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: If I had any reason whatever to suppose that it was the desire of hon. or right hon. Gentlemen to make any observations on the occasion, I would not have taken the postponement without giving them the opportunity they desired.

SIR W. LAWSON: Can the right hon. Gentleman state whether any arrangements have been made for the Whitsuntide holidays?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am sorry I am not in a position to state anything.

NAVY (COAL).

Return ordered,

"Showing names of Collieries from which supplies of coal for the use of Her Majesty's Navy were accepted, and the total quantity so purchased in 1877-8, and in 1888-9."—(*Mr. Burt.*)

MOTIONS.

MUNICIPAL RATES.

On Motion of Sir Albert Rollit, Bill to make provision for the making, assessment, and collection of Municipal Rates, ordered to be brought in by Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Woodall, Mr. Rowntree, Mr. Murdoch, and Mr. Craig.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 234.]

MR. HEALY: I wish to ask the hon. Gentleman whether his Bill has application to Ireland?

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: No, Sir; as at present drawn the Bill does not so provide, but I will give the suggestion of the hon. Member my attention, and see whether I can do anything in that direction.

GAME LAWS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Gainsford Bruce, Bill to amend the Law respecting Licences to deal in Game, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Gainsford Bruce, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Isaacs, Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Forrest Fulton, and Mr. Byrne.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 235.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL (No. 215.)

As amended, considered.

*MR. GEDGE (Stockport) said: I rise, Sir, to move that Sub-section 2, Clause 5, be omitted. I am sorry to have to do this on Report, but from a misunderstanding last night when this clause was being discussed in Committee, I was not permitted to move its rejection. I move the rejection of the clause for the reason that it is both unfair and contrary to the whole principle upon which the Estate Duty is founded with regard to property coming under probates. It is also fraught with so much delay and inconvenience as to make the collection of the moderate amount that will be received under it very detrimental, indeed, to the taxpayer. The principle of this part of the Bill is that you are taking the value of the property passing under the instrument regardless of the persons to whom it is payable, and when the statement of value is as much as £10,000, then the Estate Duty is to be paid. According to the Sub-section, though the value passing under the instrument—namely, the probate or letters of administration, is less than £10,000, you have to inquire where any real property has passed at the death of the same testator, either through his intestacy or by his will, or by his exercising the power of appointment by will; and if the value of the two estates comes to more than £10,000, then the people who inherit the personalty have to pay the 1 per cent on what they inherit, although it makes no matter to them whether there is real property or not. Take the concrete case in which a testator dies, leaving £6,000 worth of personalty, and divisible among his children. The executor is unable to prove that will unless he can satisfy the authorities either that the testator had or that he had not real estate amounting to at least £4,000. He has to make inquiries. He ascertains there is an estate worth £3,000 to £5,000. He has to find out the value of that estate; he has to write to ask questions about the estate with which he has nothing to do as executor; he has to go to the heir-at-law and ask questions which the heir-at-law is perfectly justified in not answering; he has to find out the gross value and the net value of the estates and the deductions. All this time he is kept waiting for the probate, the widow and children having, perhaps, nothing else to live upon. I have had practical experience of the proving of wills, and I know that it involves considerable expense to prove the value of real estate. For every sovereign brought into the coffers of the nation, there will be at least as much loss caused to the taxpayer by the expense and inconvenience which this requirement necessitates. The principle of the Bill is "what passes under the instrument," as the Chancellor of the Exchequer has chosen to call it; but this money does not pass under the instrument, and, therefore, on the Chancellor of the Exchequer's own principle, being less than £10,000, it ought not to be taxed. According to the right hon. Gentleman's Budget speech, he said it would not be taxed, and from the italics in the Bill it

can be seen that the proposal is an afterthought. Second thoughts in this case were not best. I understand that the Chancellor of the Exchequer objects that, if we do not marry realty to personalty by this clause, he cannot marry personalty to realty by his new 6th Clause, and that will involve a loss of a large sum of money annually. I maintain that the two things are totally different. The 6th Clause sets forth that where the realty is less than £10,000, then inquiry is to be made, not whether the testator died possessed of personalty, but whether the person who gets the real estate gets, by the death, any additional benefit which brings the total value up to £10,000. For this benefit he has to pay, not on the personalty which he also gets, but he has to pay duty on the realty. This is perfectly just and consistent with the principle of the Bill. But, under this 5th Clause, the younger children who get the personalty pay 1 per cent, while the eldest son, who gets the real property, is not to pay anything. I submit that the Bill was very much better as framed in accordance with the original intentions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I hope he will consent now to strike out this clause.

Amendment proposed, Clause 5, page 3, to leave out Sub-section 2.—(*Mr. Sydney Gedge.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section 2 stand part of the Clause."

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. J. G. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I do not feel justified in complying with the wish of my hon. Friend to leave out this clause, because I look upon it as part of the understanding in this matter, which was pressed upon me at an earlier stage of the Bill, and it was as a compromise that it was accepted. No doubt some of the difficulties are considerable, and it was for that reason I did not propose such a clause in the original draft. But the pressure put upon me by the right hon. Gentlemen the Members for Bradford and Wolverhampton, and others, caused me to do my best to produce a clause which should have the effect of removing an exemption, which was not considered a fair exemption, and the result of that attempt is the clause before the House. I do not think the administrative difficulties are as great as my hon. Friend suggests; but, in any case having introduced the clause partly at the suggestion and wish of the House, I should not feel quite justified in withdrawing it.

MR. GLADSTONE: I quite agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the anomaly referred to was taken notice of on this side of the House in the Bill as it originally stood; that, whereas in cases of mixed estates a certain sum of money which passed at death would escape taxation, if it were not a mixed estate, it would be liable to taxation. But permit me to say two things. In the first place I certainly understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he had not been able to see his way to framing legislation for the purpose of meeting that difficulty. Nor had I the smallest idea that an attempt was to be made for the purpose. But that objection was taken on this side of the House when we had not in view the full difference between realty and personalty. And I must own that, however good the intention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been in introducing this 6th Clause, as he thought, to meet the remonstrances proceeding from another part of the House, I think the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken has distinctly shown that there has been an anomaly of a most painful kind introduced into this Bill, and that there has been an extension of taxation, not in the case of realty, but in the case of personalty. Under the clause the persons who have not any interest whatever in the realty that passes upon death, but have an interest in some personal bequest which is under £10,000, would, as the Bill originally stood, not have been subject to taxation, but, as the Bill now stands, will be subject to taxation. I do not recollect whether it was from the benches behind me that the anomalies were pointed out as likely to occur in the case of a mixed estate, where the aggregate exceeded £10,000, and where the parts did not exceed £10,000, one of the anomalies being that the aggregate would escape taxation. Now, we find not that the objection is be met by bringing the aggregate under taxation, but by bringing a portion of the aggregate under taxation—namely, that

portion of it which consists of personalty, therefore aggravating most seriously the inequality to which reference has been made to-night. I am very sorry indeed to find that we have a fresh aggravation of that anomaly which has been pointed out by the hon. Gentleman in the Motion now made. There is another point on which I want to make an observation for the purpose of clearing up any remaining doubt. The Chancellor of the Exchequer must have seen that it has been only by slow degrees that we have arrived—I suppose it has been our own fault—at any clear idea of the operation of this proposal. As I understand, the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that the tax would be levied on the residuary legatee. I want to know whether that is so or not. And simply for the purpose of making things clear I will put a case—not an extreme case. I do not refer now to the case in which legacies are left expressly "free of duty," except to observe that I think the Bill of the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to provide for a due construction of that phrase, because I can conceive that it may hold to apply to Estate Duty as well as to Legacy Duty. However, that is not my point. My point is, that the House ought to be clearly informed what will be the mode of operation under this Act. Will the new Estate Duty be levied upon each specific bequest in the case of personalty where the aggregate exceeds £10,000, or will it be levied upon the residue? I put it, then: Suppose the case of an estate composed of personalty, of such an amount that after paying the whole Probate Duty it leaves £50,000 for division—£20,000 each to two sons, and making the daughter the residuary legatee—is it clear that in a case of that kind the duty will be levied on the three portions separately, or levied on a portion only—that of the residuary legatee? I am under the impression, upon consideration of the case, it would be upon the portion accruing to the residuary legatee. I must observe that in that instance it becomes an aggravation of the case. The result would be that the tax would fall upon the residuary legatee, and wherever there are children, the residuary legatee or legatees are invariably one or more of the children. So that this assumes the aspect of making the children of the testator pay the tax upon the whole inheritance, of which a considerable portion, perhaps, is going to another person. I dare say the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be kind enough to reply to my questions.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I have not the right to reply, but by the kind permission of the House I may perhaps be allowed to do so. With regard to this clause, I understand the right hon. Gentleman and my hon. Friend behind me would prefer its omission. I have introduced this clause to remedy what was considered an anomaly, but if it is the general opinion that it may lead to an increased anomaly, I am perfectly prepared to revert to the original form of the Bill, and omit this Sub-section, and the other additions to the Bill which depend upon it. Now, my right hon. Friend wishes me to explain what will be the incidence of this tax. I am sorry I have not made myself plainer, but I think from the beginning I said it would be levied as the Probate Duty is.

MR. GLADSTONE: But as to the residuary legatee.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The residuary legatee pays Probate Duty in many cases. Whether this duty will fall upon him, must, of course, depend upon the dispositions under the will, and precisely as the testator takes into consideration, when he makes his will, that the Probate Duty will fall upon the residuary legatee, or I prefer to say the residue, so will he take this increased duty into consideration, and if he considers that it falls too heavily on the residuary legatees, he will make such alterations in his will as will put them in the position in which he desires to place them. I would wish to point out to the House that the whole argument of my right hon. Friend is directed not so much against the new Estate Duty as against the Probate Duty altogether. Every word said against the one can be said against the other. But I think the right hon. Gentleman will remember that he himself made some alterations in the direction of increasing the Probate Duty, and at all events, this point is clear, that the new Estate Duty will be similar in its incidence to the Probate Duty.

*Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Thanet): My right hon. Friend has approached the subject this afternoon in so liberal a spirit, that I hope, in addition to meeting the suggestion which is now made from both sides of the House, he will also consider the expediency of reconsidering this imposition as a whole. I venture to say that this is one of the least desirable imposts which a Chancellor of the Exchequer could propose. With regard to the Estate Duty, I understand it is proposed to increase the amounts payable on succession, besides which, there is a novel method of assessing that duty. We have heard at different times of the exceptional advantages which real estate is supposed to enjoy, as compared with personalty, in respect to the Death Duties. If there be any exceptional advantages enjoyed by realty over personalty, they are more than counterbalanced by the great disadvantage under which the owner of real property approaches the question of the assessment of income tax. Those who have considered this subject must feel that if touched at all it should be dealt with in a broad and comprehensive spirit, and I believe I am fully entitled to ask the right hon. Gentleman, even at the eleventh hour, to avail himself of the opportunity of dealing with the matter in its entirety. I venture to suggest that what my right hon. Friend is now doing will render still more one-sided and unfair the position which real estate at the present moment occupies. Some hon. Gentlemen may consider that real estate ought to be subject to special disabilities, but assuming that Parliament desires to deal with the subject as a whole, fairly and justly, it cannot be denied that in some respects real estate at the present moment is placed under serious disadvantages. I do venture to hope that before the Chancellor of the Exchequer renders the anomaly still more acute, he will consider how far he can meet a legitimate demand. I ask the House to consider on this question of the Death Duties, whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer is not going far a field in having recourse to this manner of raising money for what is avowedly upon the face of it a temporary purpose. My right hon. Friend informed us that these proposals for raising additional revenue were necessitated by the proposals of the Government for Naval Defence. Without going into the merits or demerits of that question, we are aware that the expenditure will have to be discharged in the next seven years. Now, can anybody with any knowledge of contemporary history for a moment assert that a tax like this, placed upon the devolution of property, is likely, under any conceivable circumstances, to be subject to modification in a sense favourable to those who pay it? We know very well that the so-called Death Duty, especially seeing that it involves the elements of taxation of land, is not likely in the immediate future to be subject to modification.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I think the right hon. Gentleman is not speaking to the Amendment, but is going into the whole question of the Death Duties, and is now making what is properly a Second Reading speech.

*Mr. J. W. LOWTHER: I think I had better defer that part of my speech to the next clause. I trust, however, that my right hon. Friend will be able to hold out the hope—for I know he has approached this subject in a conciliatory spirit; he has given proof of that this afternoon—that he will be able to remove some, at any rate, of the anomalies which are involved.

Question put, and negatived. Subsection omitted.

*Mr. JAMES LOWTHER: In moving the omission of Clause 6, what I wish to urge on the Government is this, that when for a temporary purpose money is required, it appears to be singularly inconvenient to have recourse to a source of revenue which is obviously of a permanent character. On that ground I am disposed to take great exception to this clause, and I appeal to the general sense of the House when I say that if a Chancellor of the Exchequer is in future to be able to have indiscriminate recourse to the Death Duties, especially in the form which this Bill will authorize, there will be great temptation to him to impose taxation on those who have practically no voice in determining whether the tax shall be raised or not. I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will bear this in mind. I do not believe there ever was a Budget so thoroughly unpopular

with the most thorough-going supporters of a Government, for the great majority of us have viewed the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman with a feeling approaching dismay. I do trust we shall have some hope held out to us that this Budget will not be taken as a precedent, binding us to principles which I, for one, will always protest against—namely, the principle that permanent taxation should be levied to an unfair extent upon one special class of society under the pretext of dealing with an exceptional national emergency.

Amendment proposed, "In page 4, line 41, to leave out Clause 6."—(*Mr. J. Lowther.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'where the value of any succession' stand part of the Bill."

MR. ALLISON (Cumberland, Eskdale): It is surprising to find the right hon. Gentleman who last spoke now protesting at the last moment against what he considers to be an unpopular principle. I am afraid he cannot have seen the correspondence between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Lincolnshire, or his mind would have been somewhat relieved. There never was a time when the landed interest had less reason to complain than on the present occasion. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has argued again and again in this House that he has introduced no fresh anomalies into the taxation as distributed between personalty and realty, and I cannot see, when you have such anomalies as undoubtedly exist, that you make them more bearable by increasing the taxation. I think that personalty has great reason to complain, as the taxation upon it is made heavier. Now, the landed interest is going to bear of the £800,000 to be raised this year not one single penny; the whole will have to be borne by personalty, and so far is realty from bearing its fair proportion, that out of the total sum of £1,200,000 to be raised it will contribute the magnificent sum of £100,000.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I may point out that when Scotland and Ireland are brought into the calculation the amount contributed by realty is £150,000.

MR. ALLISON: I do not see that that makes the case of the right hon. Gentleman very much stronger; there still remains the fact that more than a million is contributed by personalty, and although the relative value is not more than two to one, yet personalty pays at the rate of ten to one. Again, if you take the Succession Duty as it stood last year, it pays only one million, while the Probate Duty contributes five millions, or in the proportion of one to five. Now the proportion is to be one to ten, and yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer tell us that no fresh anomaly has been introduced. I think he made a striking statement at the close of his speech last night, when he said that if the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian were carried two-thirds of the fresh impost would be swept away. Now, the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was to avoid the tax falling on legatees receiving less than £10,000. Surely, then, the meaning of the protest of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is that two-thirds of this new taxation will be borne by these smaller legatees, which we were at first led to believe would be exempted. I must confess I think it is extremely hard that the landed interest should raise any outcry on this occasion, when it has never had less cause for doing so. The tax, in fact, will fall in great severity and most unfairly on those least able to bear it. Apparently the resources of the House are exhausted, and we cannot raise an Amendment which would prevent the tax being paid by persons who receive less than £10,000, which was the original proposal; but I think, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian said last night, it will provide a very useful cry in the country during the autumn campaign.

*MR. GOSCHEN: My right hon. Friend below me tells me that my proposals have been received with dismay by a large number of the supporters of the Government. I am quite aware that there is a proportion of our supporters who do not approve of this method of raising taxation to meet the expenditure of the country; but I am bound to say that many others have shown nothing like either dismay or disapproval. What with the opinions of hon. Members opposite, who think that personalty is too hardly dealt with, and the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet, who

complains that realty is not fairly treated, I am between the devil and the deep sea. I believe, however that the Government has struck the mean between the two extremes, and has been just, as far as the imposers of a tax can ever be just. The hon. Member for the Eskdale Division has fallen into error by taking the whole value of realty, instead of the taxable value. He has suggested that the new taxation will be borne by the smallest legatees. But it has been proved over and over again that they will not suffer, and that being so, we should lose an enormous sum by accepting the principle of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, under which many a rich estate would be exempted if the residuary legatee received only a small sum.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I must say that the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman at the end of his speech last night struck us very forcibly. The Amendment was intended to prevent injustice being done to smaller people, and the right hon. Gentleman at once declared that the acceptance of the Amendment would take away two-thirds of the new tax. Now I have examined the statistical abstract in order to see what were the numbers and the amount of properties left under £10,000. The number of persons so placed were 96 per cent of those who paid probate, and the amount was one-third of the whole. If that is so, and if your new arrangement is going to strike—and strike unfairly, as we think—persons in that position, I could easily understand the views and statement of the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. GOSCHEN: It does not touch any of these.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The arrangement of the right hon. Gentleman is so obscure that I confess it is difficult to understand it. I am not going to interfere in the domestic quarrels between the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet, on the subject of the Budget, but I must say that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has met the statement of my hon. Friend the Member for Eskdale with the remarkable argument that the owners of realty complained of the Budget as well as the owners of personalty, and therefore it must be just. I fail to see the logic of that conclusion. The hon. Member for Eskdale has shown that out of a tax which will ultimately yield £1,200,000 realty has to pay £150,000 only. Will the Chancellor of the Exchequer maintain that this is the real ratio between realty and personalty in this country?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER: Unencumbered realty.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Oh, yes; we know the right hon. Gentleman is one of the champions of that system of encumbrances, of which he is so fond. I say the final judgment of this House rests on the question: Is this or not the true ratio between the two classes of property? That is a plain and simple issue. The Chancellor of the Exchequer seems to object to our putting it before the country, but if the tax is imposed, the country will be able to judge whether the House of Commons has acted fairly between these different classes of property.

*THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I should like to make one or two observations, for the right hon. Gentleman opposite has attempted to lead the discussion away from the point in dispute between us. He says we have rejected an Amendment which would have removed the tax from the smaller legatees. Surely he cannot have followed the course of the discussion last night, for nobody who considered the terms of the Amendment proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian could possibly have thought it would relieve the small legatees in that respect. Could a clause have been inserted exempting from taxation those legatees receiving less than £10,000, that would have been desirable, but the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment would not have effected that. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby has said that 96 per cent of the legatees receive under £10,000. Well, if that is so, it shows the extreme consideration which has guided my right hon. Friend in fixing the limit at that figure. It should be borne in mind that we have to deal with the gross amount, and not with the mere number of persons paying. Again, the right hon. Gentleman admitted that although the smaller legatees form 96 per cent in number, yet they represent only one-third of the

sum total which will be charged with that duty, and this fact shows that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has succeeded in levying taxation on two-thirds of the amount, while leaving free 96 per cent of the total payers of the duty. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will make this clear when he comes to address the assemblies in the country to which he has referred. The right hon. Gentleman ought to have shown that this levying of the tax will cause hardship in individual cases, and that the effect of the tax being levied on individuals under the same instrument who happen to be in one class or the other will result in additional hardship being inflicted. I do not deny that hon. Members have attempted to show this.

SIR W. HARCOURT: All I ask is, is the true ratio between the properties £150,000 to £1,050,000? If it is the true ratio, I admit the arrangement is just, but I ask the Attorney General to prove it.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: The right hon. Gentleman assumed that it was not the true ratio for the purposes of his argument.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I want you to show that that is the true ratio.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: It may or not be a prudent course to discuss the total value of real property as compared with personal property as a whole, but if we enter into a discussion of that subject we must examine the whole of the burdens imposed on one class as well as the other. The right hon. Gentleman states that he will repeat these facts, which are inaccurate, on the platform in the country. Let it be known that they are inaccurate. It is because the right hon. Gentleman has failed to point out or perceive that 96 per cent of the small holders or small legatees will be left out and be free from this tax, while two-thirds of the property passing held by the richer people will be charged, that I think it necessary that the right hon. Gentleman's attention should be called to this fact before he is tempted in a moment of enthusiasm to reproduce on the platform such a misrepresentation of the position. I hope that before the right hon. Gentleman reproduces such an argument he will satisfy himself whether it has any relation to the subject we have been discussing. If he reproduces them we shall be entitled to say that his premises are incorrect, his deductions inaccurate, and his conclusions unjust.

*MR. PICTON (Leicester): I do not think the hon. and learned Gentleman has been quite as fair as he might have been. He said the Amendment proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) would have afforded no means of redressing what we allege to be an injustice. He must have forgotten that that Amendment provided for a sort of drawback. Surely this would have afforded some redress of the injustice of which we are complaining. Again, the hon. and learned Gentleman has said to the figures quoted by my hon. Friend (Mr. Allison) mean nothing unless we can get at what they represent. We are not without means of arriving approximately, at all events, at the value represented by a duty of £1,050,000 on personality, and £150,000 on realty. Take the Report of the Inland Revenue for 1877-78. In that year probate was paid on personalty of the value of £158,106,000, Legacy Duty was paid on property of the value of £75,619,450, and Succession Duty was paid on £43,528,597. Yes, but what did the £43,000,000 represent? Did it represent the entire value of the landed property that passed? Nothing of the kind. I believe it is generally reckoned that the Succession Duty is paid on about 13½ years' purchase of the actual rent. That is not very much more, I suppose, than half the real value; but even taking it that it represents two-thirds of the real value, which is far too advantageous to our opponents, the real value of the £43,528,597 would be £64,872,000 and a few hundreds, practically £65,000,000. If the value of the personalty and realty in the year in which we are entering is in anything like these proportions, then a more monstrously unjust impost was never passed by the House. Personalty will be charged at ten times the rate of realty.

*MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Gentleman ought not to say that. It would be misleading the public to say we are taxing personalty at a rate ten times greater than that at which we are taxing realty.

*MR. PICTON: What we say is, that both classes of property ought to be

taxed at the same rate. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: "So they are."] Apart from all technicalities, I think the common sense of our fellow countrymen will hold that two kinds of property are taxed very differently in passing from one to another in death. This is only of a piece with the manner in which we have been treating them continually. I take again the year 1878-78. The charge for Probate and Legacy Duty was £7,504,000 and that for Succession Duty was only £849,510. If I am right that the £43,000,000 represents about two-thirds of the absolute value, the Succession Duty ought to have amounted to £2,826,000 instead of to £849,540. I am astonished that the right hon. Gentleman with the antecedents and political traditions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer should ever have ventured to propose so cruel and unjust an impost.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): This is really a question for the country. The people outside will want to know whether there has been any attempt at levying an equitable tax to pay for this foolish war scare. Whatever outcry there is is by those who are pleading on behalf of settled real property, if the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Lowther) will look at all sides of the question, he will see there is another class of persons affected far more seriously than those for whom he speaks.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I distinctly stated that my remarks did not apply by any means exclusively to settled real property; on the contrary, what I objected to more than anything was the new method of assessment adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer which presses with exceptional severity on freehold estates.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: All real property is not in rural districts, and under the control of gentlemen who can boast such an ancestry as the right hon. Gentleman. I am the representative of a community where the assessment of real property is over a million sterling a year. That, of course, represents an enormous total of real property —I suppose something like £25,000,000. There are scores of other boroughs of the same character where this tax will fall infinitely more heavily than upon the interest the right hon. Gentleman represents. I say there is something despicable in the position taken up by a few Gentlemen in this House in seeking to bring extraordinary pressure on the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he will give them a promise that as soon as possible their kind of property and interest shall be relieved from this tax levied upon them.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I beg to move the omission of the words from "and where," in line 2, to "£10,000," in line 7. As we have cut out of Clause 5 what I may call the mixed estates, I propose to follow the same course here.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 2, to leave out after the word "pounds" to the word "a," in line 7.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out remain part of the clause."

*MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): I understand that in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's opinion this is consequential upon the omission of Sub-section 2 of Clause 5. I think I shall be able to show the House not only that this Amendment is not consequential, but that it is not one to which we ought to assent. It was proposed by the Bill to levy a duty to be collected along with Probate Duty or personalty above £10,000 in value, and it was proposed to make provision whereby the duty would be leviable in the case of personalty not amounting to £10,000, but where there was realty which brought the amount left up to that figure. It was pointed out earlier this afternoon that Sub-section 2 of Clause 5, which was, by consent, omitted, would lead to certain inconvenience. The Chancellor of the Exchequer evidently thinks that because we have omitted that clause we should omit this, although this deals purely with Succession Duty. The right hon. Gentleman's argument is that land and personalty rest on the same footing for the purpose of the Succession Duty. If that be his argument, how can he go back and ask us to say there is some analogy between this Sub-section and the Sub-section which we have already agreed to omit? I protest against the suggestion that the reasons which led to the omission

of the one clause have any bearing upon this clause.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I will not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 18.

*MR. HALDANE: For the purpose of raising a point I raised last night, I beg to move the omission of the clause. Clause 18, in substance, provides that in order to get at contracts as distinguished from conveyances, the Conveyance Duty is to be imposed on all contracts for the sale and purchase of property; but, as in the case of certain kinds of property, and notably in the case of land in this country, it is customary, and in some cases necessary, to perfect the title by a conveyance. The Government do not desire to impose the duty on the contract in that case, because it would afterwards be collected on the conveyance. When one has a perfect legal title to land it must be conveyed by deed in order to perfect the title. In that case the section is not to operate, but I should think that in the case of at least half the land conveyed in this country, the title is subject to the technicality that the legal estate is what is called outstanding. If that is so it is not necessary to convey the property by deed, but it is the proper and almost unvarying practice to do so. The result will be that where the legal estate is outstanding the duty will have, as the clause is worded, to be paid. It is no use pointing to a subsequent part of the clause, because that does not help you. The duty will be payable upon the contract, notwithstanding that no conveyance or perfecting of the title may take place for months afterwards, and notwithstanding that the contract may go off altogether. In that case there will be a double burden: first of all, money will have been paid which never ought to have been paid, and in the second place if the money is got back, the interest on it will have been lost to the person paying the money. I do not see how the Government are to get out of the difficulty.

Amendment proposed, in page 11, line 24, to leave out Clause 18—(*Mr. Haldane.*)

Question proposed, "That Clause 18 stands part of the Bill."

SIR R. WEBSTER: I submit that my hon. and learned Friend has for once mistaken the point. All transactions which must be conveyed by deeds are already subject to duty under existing Acts.

*MR. HALDANE: I do not wish to press the matter. I have put my point, and I cannot at all agree with the Attorney General's explanation. I am not suggesting that the duty should not be imposed as deeds, but that it should not be imposed as contracts. The responsibility, however, rests with the Government.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill to be read the third time on Monday next.

NAVAL DEFENCE BILL. (No. 186.)

Order for Third Reading, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a third time."

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I am surprised at the haste with which the Government are endeavouring to push through this Bill, though to some extent I can understand it. With the object of the Bill I have no sympathy; my position is objection to it *in toto*. From the first I opposed it, and nothing has been said during the debates on the various stages to induce me to change the opinion I have formed, that the Bill is an evil in itself, vicious in principle, and calculated to precipitate an appeal to war. I venture to think that in the near future it will land us in administrative difficulties, and possibly international difficulties. We have absolutely no guarantee for the economical expenditure of this vast sum of money, nor have we indeed any guarantee that it will be rightfully expended. Nor do I think the object with which the Bill is brought forward will be attained, namely the creation of a Navy that shall be efficient in the sense in which efficiency is understood by those who have expert knowledge of the Naval Service, and especially in the view of the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), who seems to be practically the author of the measure. The reason is obvious to me, though perhaps not so obvious to those who have not carefully read the various papers which have been put before us during the last three years, and do

not understand the actual position into which we have drifted as regards the Navy. I am surprised that the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, and the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) have not carried into practice the principles which they have professed over and over again, and desired that no large additional expenditure should be incurred in regard to the Navy until there is an absolute reform in the administration of naval affairs. I hold this to be a most important matter, and again and again has it been urged upon the Government. Investigations have been made, elaborate reports have been presented, but so far as I am able to judge, comparatively few of the reforms insisted upon have been carried into effect. I am not prepared to say that attempts at reform have not been made, but little has been effected. My attitude towards the Bill is by no means an attack upon the noble Lord (Lord G. Hamilton) and his colleagues for bringing in the measure; my observations rather tend to show that what have been proved to be necessary reforms at the Admiralty have not only not been carried out, but in some very important particulars have not yet been by any means attempted. It seems to me of the first importance that the administrative body having control of these 21 millions should itself be reformed, and should give an account to the country of the manner in which these vast sums are expended. The First Lord has all along regarded our action too much in the light of an attack upon Her Majesty's Government. He cannot sustain that view, but on the contrary, he has a right to congratulate himself on the way this Bill has been received on this side of the House, and especially by right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench. I can well understand their position, in so far as the constitutional question is concerned—they have raised that definite question, and I shall not go into it; but so far as the actual demand in the Bill is concerned, they have taken no particular stand in regard to it, and that I can only account for by supposing that their near connection with the Admiralty has tainted their judgment and they do not see how to grapple with the question. But the noble Lord has no reason to complain of us as to our attitude towards the measure. Indeed, so far as I am concerned, and I think I can speak for some others, my desire is that, if the money is voted, it shall be economically expended so that we get our money's worth. If I receive some guarantee that the money shall be so spent, I shall feel more satisfied than I do at present. The noble Lord was somewhat facetious with regard to Members on this side and their attention to his speeches. He assumed that our object in studying those speeches was for the purpose of proving that he was inconsistent in some minor particulars. I can assure the noble Lord that I had not the remotest idea of that kind, but certainly we did not expect to find his utterances time after time contradicted by official documents presented to the House, and in themselves self-contradictory. This, however, has been the case. There was a very singular incident a few nights ago. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) quoted in good faith from official documents, believing those documents gave the facts as only the Admiralty could give them. He was followed by the Junior Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), who presented figures with an assurance that they were absolutely correct. But the figures so given did not agree with those given by the first Lord nor with the figures given for the information of the House in a Return. Now I would ask seriously, if we are not to rely on the accuracy of these official documents presented to the House, upon what shall we rely for information and how are we to get at the facts? In all our quotations from documents and official utterances we have been actuated by the desire to get at the truth. I have no desire to throw obstacles in the way of our having a magnificent fleet, a fleet all sufficient for all purposes, but I want to know whether we are or are not in a position to compete with other naval nations in case of conflict. Well, we are assured over and over again that we were in that position, but then in the course of a few months, say weeks, we were told that we are in so dilapidated a condition in regard to the Navy that it is absolutely necessary to spend 21 millions of money, and that the money must be voted without delay. Now, I think the Government would do well

when we are concerned with a large expenditure on a great Department to give Parliament an absolutely reliable and full statement of the case. Never has the House refused to grant money when the expenditure has been shown to be necessary for the Naval Service, and so it will always be if necessity is shown. When we quote from the noble Lord's speeches he, by some method, explains away what he has said, saying what may be true yesterday may not be true to-day. Well, certainly, circumstances sometimes change suddenly, as in time of war for instance. But we are not at war, nor do I see any signs that we are approaching a state of warfare. Whether these warlike preparations are likely to be a provocative of war is another matter. I do not expect hon. and gallant Gentlemen opposite to agree with me, but what happens is this: We are told, for example, that France and Germany are forming large fleets, and possibly they are, but why? I believe a year or two ago we found it necessary, as we said, to spend a large sum of money on warships, guns, and munitions of war, and thereupon these foreign nations thought this meant something, that some attack was to be made somewhere, and so they began augmenting their armaments. Right hon. and hon. Gentlemen point to this and say, "We must build some ships; we must keep ahead and preserve our supremacy." So, actually, having provoked this increase of shipbuilding on the Continent, we make further efforts to keep ahead. I doubt the wisdom of such a policy as this. Why should we lose our heads in this competition upon warlike expenditure? I endeavoured, from the information presented to us, to get at the state of our Navy, and discover how it is that the necessity for this expenditure has come about. The noble Lord assumes that we regard the Admiralty as a veritable sink of iniquity; but I do not think we have said anything to justify that impression. But I certainly do share the opinion that there is much wasteful expenditure, and, so far as I can gather, there is very little supervision or control, and no one seems to know exactly what expenditure is absolutely needed, or how the money has been expended. And here I have a particular complaint to make. For some time past we have been dealing with Navy expenditure, and in this Bill we assent to a large expenditure in that direction. I have been looking anxiously for the accounts of Dockyard expenditure and the Report of the Auditor General, and I hoped to find from these the evidence of some of those reforms the noble Lord said had been initiated. I am not prepared to say that some have not been initiated, but I do not find from this Report just circulated that much has actually been done. This bulky Blue Book was only circulated this morning. I have not made myself fully acquainted with its contents, but from the Report it appears that the Auditor General has not been able to make a very careful audit of the accounts. I find that the test audit of the accounts for 1887-88 had to be suspended because the Auditor General could not go on with it. Then a Treasury Minute was passed in January last, and the Auditor General was asked to take up the accounts again, and the Treasury in that Minute undertook that the position of the Auditor General, as regards these accounts, should be defined by legislative enactment. The Auditor General explains that he has not had time for a proper test audit. It may be very satisfactory when he does make it, but we shall not know until the evidence is placed in our hands. From the evidence we have, it does not appear that things have been so well carried out as some of us were led to suppose from some of the late utterances of the noble Lord. I have not time to go into much detail, but I may mention that in paragraph 21 in reference to joiners—it may not be the worst example, but I give it—the Auditor General says:—

"Several instances of apparently excessive cost were found in the Joiners' Balance Sheet at Portsmouth, where, for example, 13 engineers' spare gear boxes were found to have cost £93 1s. 11d., while the Rate Book value was given as £32 10s 0d."

You see the wide difference between the estimate and the actual price.

"The explanation given on the balance sheet is that the Rate Book price is incorrect; but as no amendment of the Rate Book price of the articles was traced at all equivalent to the difference disclosed, a question has been put to the Admiralty on the subject."

Well, I do not know what the answer may be, but certainly points such as

these should be cleared up when these accounts are placed in our hands. It appears that some of the accounts have not been gone into because there was not time. Remarks are made about irregularities in the valution of stock, and a great many other things. My complaint is that this book has not reached us early enough, and does not give us sufficient information. As a precedent, the noble Lord quoted the method pursued years ago by Lord Palmerston in regard to fortifications. Politically speaking, the noble Lord is not old enough to remember the circumstances connected with that fortification scheme. I remember many circumstances connected with it, and I know that it was referred to out of doors, if not in this House, as "Palmerston's folly." I remember also seeing the works in course of construction at Portsdown Hill and other places, and certainly any man of common sense would have pronounced the scheme foolish from its commencement. Yet this is the precedent quoted by the noble Lord when embarking on a great shipbuilding scheme. I hope it may not in the result turn out to be a complete precedent, and that the programme when carried out will not effect its object. It is foreshadowed by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, and hon. and gallant Gentlemen opposite endorse his view that this is only a small instalment of what will ultimately be required before the Navy is brought up to the desired standard. That is not a view that I hold. I cannot believe that the ordinary Estimates, presented year by year, if properly and economically administered, would not give us a Fleet sufficient for all purposes, even in time of war. As I have said, there is no guarantee that all this money will be wisely expended. I cannot think that high naval officers at the head of the Dockyards are the right men in the right place to carry out this programme. I say this without any reflection on gallant and distinguished officers. I only say I cannot think that they have the qualifications for the post. You want a man who has intimate practical knowledge with all these details of shipbuilding. It may be that their way of discharging their duty is in every respect satisfactory, and I have heard it stated that things are being carried on better than formerly. I am very glad to hear it, but it seems to me we ought to know exactly what is going on, and how the officers are discharging their duties. I do hope and trust that when this Bill is passed, one of the first things that will be done by the Admiralty will be to place ample details before the House—details that we can vote upon without the fear of their being challenged by subsequent details picked out of a pigeonhole at the Admiralty to which no one has access but the First Lord of the Admiralty and his colleague in this House. My desire is that this large sum of money, if voted by the House, shall be so expended that the nation will get money's worth for the money spent. That is one of the things we are sent here to secure. What we want is that we shall get as much for our money as would be obtained in any private shipbuilding yard. Any private ship-building company would be able to give satisfactory replies to its shareholders, and surely in Her Majesty's Dockyards, where we have the pick of the men of the nation, and where we pay the highest salaries, we ought to find officials who can present us with such a statement as will satisfy us in regard to this expenditure. I beg to move that this Bill be read a third time on this day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Howell.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the question."

*Mr. PICTON (Leicester): I rise to second this Motion. I have on the Paper notice of an Amendment which, of course, I shall not have an opportunity of moving now. That Amendment expresses the ground on which I protest against the passing of this Bill. It is on the ground of policy that I protest against it. The expenditure is not so much larger than our ordinary expenditure as was at first supposed. I believe there will be an increase of some £1,700,000 a year for seven years. I would ask why there was such a flourish of trumpets about the introduction of this new programme? Was it to sound a war note through Europe? Or was it to gratify the Jingo supporters of the Government? The love of the English-

man for his Navy is well known, and for some time we have had dinned into our ears the declaration of Richard Cobden that he would spend if necessary £100,000,000 upon the Navy. Yes, but there we always the condition, "if necessary." What we are insisting upon now is that the necessity for this expenditure has not been shown. The fact is, that the question turns upon policy, and the policy which requires an enlarged fleet has never yet been explained to the House. Obviously the strength of a fleet that would be amply sufficient for the ordinary protection of our commerce and the maintenance of the connection between the various parts of the Empire in times of peace is a very different thing, indeed, from that of the fleet which will be necessary if we are going to meddle in any plot or intrigue in Europe. I maintain that the only position for this country to take up is one of what I may describe as cordial neutrality towards all the world. It is only by ostentatiously ignoring that point of view that our opponents on the other side of the House are able to accuse us with any face whatever of want of patriotism. We are as anxious for the safety and prosperity of our country as any hon. Gentleman opposite, but we maintain that those who are going to vote for an increased expenditure on the fleet are going to vote for a meddlesome foreign policy. It is against that we protest. If it were in our power we would decline to advance one single farthing towards such a costly piece of mischief. It is easy to show that if our Colonies and our commerce alone were being considered we should want no increase of the fleet. It is said we must make our fleet equal to any two foreign fleets. Is it probable or is it possible that, without our meddling with any European intrigue or going beyond our own business, any two European Powers will conspire together to capture one of our Colonies, or to play the pirate towards our commerce on the high seas? I would ask any hon. Member of common sense, is it conceivable that France and Russia would combine together to attack any of our Colonies except on the ground of some European complication? I do not believe that even the most valiant of the gallant Gentlemen opposite will say for one moment that they would do so. If we never enter into any complications, if we determine to mind our own business, it is absurd to suppose that any two nations would, without cause shown, join to attack our Colonies. The First Lord of the Admiralty said in introducing this measure that the amount of forces available for attacking our commercial interests are continually increasing. But who wants to attack those interests? Are we living in a world of pirates? Are foreign countries nothing but dens of robbers? I myself have more faith in human nature. [*Ministerial laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen who laugh at our simplicity in this respect imagine that they are living in the middle ages, when every man's hand was against his fellows. They forget altogether the advance of the world. They point to the terrible armaments that are in existence—armaments for which we are very greatly responsible—and they say "How can we live in a world like this unless we are armed to the teeth?" But foreign nations are beginning to see more and more that these large armaments are a curse, and they are all longing to get rid of them. The Declaration of Paris has been referred to. At the time when that Declaration was being drawn up there was a considerable amount of correspondence between this country and the United States, and if the European Powers had been willing to assert that all private property even in the ships of an enemy should be free from capture, the Americans would have joined in the Declaration of Paris, and our commerce on every sea would have been sacred. Of course, I know dangers might arise. Every treaty is liable to be broken; but still, taking all ordinary human probabilities, we are perfectly safe in saying that if our rulers at that date had only had common sense, and had only freed themselves from absurd superstitions and traditions so far as to join the United States in that rational extension of the Declaration of Paris, we should not have been at this moment called upon to enlarge our fleet. At this moment I doubt not, if the Government would take the initiative, both the United States and the Governments of European Powers would be only too glad to enter into any such agreement. And to whose interest is it that this should be done? We have a commercial

navy equal to all the commercial navies in the world. I find that our shipping in most of the considerable ports equals the shipping of all other countries. Surely it is more to our interest that merchant shipping should be protected than it is to the interest of those who have small navies; and yet it is we of all people in the world who have been the obstructives, and who have refused to enter into this engagement. It is not now too late. If, instead of peddling with new guns and new ships, our Government will enter into negotiations with other nations, I have no doubt that the Declaration of Paris may be enlarged, so that our merchants might be able to sleep in peace. But that does not suit hon. and gallant Gentlemen opposite. The word "supremacy" has been used again and again in the course of this debate. We are assured that our supremacy at sea must be absolutely guaranteed. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Yes, that is the spirit in which foreign nations are dealt with. We are not to have peace, nor quietness, nor friendliness, nor neighbourliness, but supremacy. Well, Sir, of course, that is a challenge to other nations to build an ironclad for every one of ours if they can afford it. The hon. and gallant Admiral (Admiral Field) laughs, because he knows this country has a longer purse than most others, and he likes to play at the game of extravagance. It reminds me of a game children at school sometimes play at, and which they call "showing each other for the most." One shows a halfpenny and the other produces a penny. Then the first shows a sixpence and the second a shilling, and the richer of the two wins and asserts his "supremacy." I maintain that the repeated emphasis with which our "supremacy" has been asserted during this debate is an unworthy challenge to the rest of the world. We are told that the number of men who are to be added to the Fleet will not be sufficient to man all the vessels. What is to be done with the vessels that are not manned? Our ships of war are no longer the beautiful and romantic structures which in days gone by were moved by the winds as things of life. They are huge floating factories, crammed almost on every deck with expensive machinery. It is well known that machinery suffers very much from idleness, and when these ships lie idle in our docks for a long time the machinery must suffer. Just one word in conclusion as to the influence we ought to exert on the rest of the world. I am sure we must all feel that militarism is a terrible blot on the civilisation of the world. I cannot but think that the suffering now being caused by the prevalence of strikes throughout Germany is almost entirely due to the monstrous and wicked extravagance with which the results of human labour are lavished on the means of destruction. In order to meet the heavy demands of money necessary to supply these armaments all kinds of heavy imposts have to burden commerce. It is not, as the Fair Traders inform us, solely for the protection of French and German industries that the import duties are imposed, but because that is the only way in which money can be raised for the purpose of meeting the heavy military expenditure. If the people had to pay the amount by means of a poll tax or an income tax, there would be a rebellion next week. Therefore, these heavy imposts are placed upon commerce. The result is that prices rise and wages sink until the poor workers are so miserable that they have no resort but to strike work, and sometimes even to threaten violence. What, I would ask, are we doing to help our fellow-creatures? If we had the courage of our grand position in the world, if we believed in the moral supremacy of this country, we should pursue a peaceful course, and set an example of moderate, gradual, and peaceable disarmament, and I have little doubt that, little by little, our example would be followed. Instead of that, we go about swelling with vanity and bragging of our naval supremacy, thus forcing other nations to continue their armaments. By such conduct we lessen commerce in the world, we diminish our own prosperity, we take the bread out of the mouths of millions of workers in Europe, and we diminish the comfort of our own workers. It is on these broad grounds of policy that I emphatically protest against these unpatriotic and wasteful measures. I know my words may fall upon deaf ears. But I hope that in the next Parliament I shall meet some of the hon. Gentlemen opposite face to face—I do not think I shall meet many

of them, but I hope I may meet some—and we shall then see on which side is the public opinion of this country. The people have never yet been awakened. They do not know their own power; but when they realize, not their sordid interests, but their higher moral interests and the interests of civilization, and when they know their power, the Government, and the hon. Members who support this retrograde, heathenish policy, will be swept off the Benches of this House.

*ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I do not propose to spend much time in answering the speech of the hon. Member who has just sat down, but I would suggest that the Government should employ the hon. Gentleman as a special peace Commissioner to go to Berlin to convert Prince Bismarck to his views. When this has been done, it will be time for us to give up our ideas about naval supremacy. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell), whom I always listen to with interest, and who always impresses me with the fact that he speaks from conviction, has spoken about the inconsistencies of politicians. For my own part, I have long given up the idea that I should find politicians consistent. If the hon. Member desires to find consistency in a politician, I would advise him to go to Derby for it. The hon. Member says we have, under the present system of administration, no guarantee that this money will be rightly expended. I can assure the hon. Member that the Navy cannot afford to wait until the reforms of administration which he wishes to initiate have been carried out. I have, however, no objection to the reforms going on side by side with the requisite expenditure on the Navy. I am well aware that there has been much to complain of in the past with regard to our dockyards, but no Government and no Board of Admiralty have done more than those at present in office to improve the system of dockyard administration. The hon. Member alludes to certain inconsistencies, and says he cannot trust politicians. Then why don't you trust us? If you do trust us we will not deceive you. We have no desire to plunge the country into war. On the contrary, we have as much interest in keeping down expenditure as hon. Gentlemen opposite, but we know the real necessities of the case, and I maintain that no Government has done more than the present to try and improve the administration of the dockyards, and to bring them up to the required standard of efficiency. It has been our duty to study this naval programme. If a man is ill he does not quarrel with his physician as to the nature of the medicine he gets. If he gets an emetic he takes it, knowing that it is for his good; and if we prescribe an occasional emetic, it is for the nation's good. I will not say more in regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green. He is a good-natured man, and I have no doubt he was honest in all he said. But the hon. Member himself is slightly inconsistent. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) said the other night that he should stand by the Report of the Committee on Hereditary Pensions. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green followed his Leader in the same direction, but if he is prepared to follow the Report of the Committee which sat upon these Pensions, why should he decline to follow the Report of the Committee which sat last year on the Navy Estimates and of which he was himself a Member?

MR. HOWELL: The hon. and gallant Admiral is mistaken. I was not a Member of the Committee.

*ADMIRAL FIELD: I beg the hon. Member's pardon. I thought he was. The Committee recommended that the Board of Admiralty should submit a programme to the Cabinet before the Estimates are fixed. The Board of Admiralty have never carried out that recommendation till now. Then I would ask the hon. Member for Bethnal Green as he supported the recommendation of one Committee last night that he should support the recommendation of the other Committee now. He says he believes that the Government are yielding to the pressure of the Services. I only hope to a certain extent that is true, but I think the hon. Member is paying us too high a compliment without intending it. We have done our best to wake up our sleepy countrymen, and no one has worked harder than myself to subject the Government to pressure. I rejoice to hear that the Government have yielded to the pressure of the Service, and I am

much obliged to the First Lord of the Admiralty for the compliment he has paid naval men in that matter. We have been subjected to a great deal of criticism; but I do not much regard that of the Senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who always appears to speak with his tongue in his cheek. The hon. Member treats these matters like a game of chess. But in conversation I have always found the hon. Member ready to declare that the Navy of this country should be double that of France. Mr. Cobden said if he learned that France was trying to bring up her Navy to a level with ours he would build two ships to her one, even if it cost £100,000,000.

MR. PICTON: If necessary.

*ADMIRAL FIELD: I was not alluding to the right hon. Gentleman, but to the hon. Member for Northampton. I will not, however, waste time in arguing the question. The hon. Baronet who seconded the hon. Member spoke about Jingoes, and he said "I do hate Jingoes," but at the same time he seems to hate only the old Jingo spirit. I may remind the hon. Baronet that the power of the country was built up by Jingoes and can only be maintained by Jingoes. It is the Jingo spirit of this country which has made it what it is. If we read history we shall find that our Naval and Military heroes were Jingoes. It will be a bad day for England when Englishmen are taught to despise the Jingo spirit. We have also been subjected to criticism from our friends. The hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Maclean), who, I am sorry not to see in his old place, told us that it is absurd to maintain now the Fleet which we had at the end of the Napoleonic War; no one ever contends that we should, but we want a Fleet double that of the strongest of our neighbours. He asked whether all the Navies in the world could blockade these islands. Perhaps not, but a great disaster at sea would bring us to our knees. It would not be necessary to invade the country, for there would not be three months' food in it. Two-thirds of our supply has to come from abroad, and we have also to obtain our supply of raw material from abroad. If it cannot come in the Lancashire mills will be silent and the people starve. If we suffer a Naval disaster we shall be at the mercy of our enemies. The hon. Member says, "Could they seize your Colonies? If you were defeated on the high seas they would compel the surrender of your Colonies and India."

MR. HOWELL: I did not say that.

*ADMIRAL FIELD: No; but somebody else did, but I cannot charge my memory with all the unwise things that hon. Members have said. Among those unwise things was that of the hon. Member for Oldham, who said that if we suffered disaster we could make terms with our enemies. Hon. Members may think there is no danger, and that we are all wild and visionary persons. We have for many years maintained that our Navy should be equal to that of any two other Powers, and I am thankful to say that the Government, owing to the pressure which has been put upon them by public opinion, have resolved to have a Navy equal to that of any two Naval Powers. I am also thankful that the Government have taken naval men into their confidence, from outside the Admiralty, and that they consulted nine Admirals before they put their proposals before the country. This is the first time that has been done, but I hope it will not be the last. I do not think that it is necessary to waste much time on the statements of the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir E. Reed). The hon. Member is in the habit of making strong statements in this House. There is one thing which I do admire in the hon. Member. He is an intense believer in himself, and he is what I may call a strong admirer of himself. In the sort of love-letter which he sent to the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington he accuses the Officials of the Admiralty, and he employs all the hard names we are accustomed to hear him use here. It appears to be the ambition of the hon. Member to act as universal umpire upon all the Admiralty designs. Well, of course, his day may come, and he may be able to show that he is qualified to be First Lord, Chief Constructor, and Controller rolled into one. What is the condition of our reserve at this moment? Seventeen battle ships ready altogether at home, and only five in the Mediterranean, whilst the French have 14 or 17 at Toulon. If war were to come now we must at once send nine battle ships to reinforce the Mediter-

ranean Fleet, or withdraw it altogether; this would only leave eight battle ships at home besides coast defence vessels. By the new scheme we are to have 70 ships, 10 of which are to be battle ships. In this House great changes may come about, but that is all the more reason why we should not leave it to future Parliaments to reduce Estimates. It is all the more necessary to put the affair into the form of a Bill. It is one thing to cut down the Estimates, as in times past, to our sorrow. It is quite another thing to repeal an Act of Parliament. There we have to deal with the other House. (*Laughter from the Opposition.*) Oh, I am perfectly frank. If hon. Members opposite think we are going to have a new Parliament and Home Rule for Ireland, it is all the more necessary to make Ireland pay her fair share towards the defence of the Empire before it is too late. I rejoice over this matter. Our Navy is our very life, and although hon. Members may not like the term "our naval supremacy," the English people like it. Hon. Members seem to think that the commerce of the country is not in danger, and they talk of bloated armaments. In 1793 our commerce with the whole world amounted to £40,000,000; it is now £1,000,000,000 sterling. What happened in the last war? Our trade in 1793, when we were supreme at sea, was under £40,000,000, and we lost in two years no less than 3,000 vessels captured while we captured 800 only. In six months, in 1804 and 1805, we lost 271 vessels and captured seven only; from 1793 to 1814 we lost 10,871 vessels, valued at £200,000,000, and we captured 1,031 privateers, with 9,400 guns and 69,147 men. We also issued 10,605 letters of marque. If our loss from 1793 to 1814 amounted to £200,000,000, what would it amount to now, when we have £1,000,000,000 of commerce at stake, and have daily afloat on the high seas £150,000,000 sterling of commerce? Our steamers number over 5,000, and we have over 14,000 sailing vessels. What a glorious harvest that would offer to the privateers of an enemy if we were not strong enough to protect it! There are those who, in spite of some miserable crotchets, know in their hearts that there is nothing so important to maintain as the supremacy of England at sea, and while we are in power on this side of the House, we mean to maintain it. Our commerce is now twenty times as great as it was in the last war. And if we were unfortunately to find ourselves involved in a war to-morrow, if it were then discovered that we have not taken adequate precautions, we should deserve to suffer. But we cannot wait until we get our deserts. I am quite willing to address any working class constituency in England, even Birmingham, the heart of Radicalism, on this matter. The opposition to this Bill, which has come from the Front Bench opposite, has not been upon the merits of the measure, but only on its financial aspect. The right hon. Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) has called the financial proposals weak-kneed and flabby finance. I may throw back that phrase with interest and declare that the present position of the Navy is due to the weak-kneed and flabby Liberal Governments in the past. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) says that the Liberal Party have always been in favour of a strong Navy. I am afraid that the right hon. Gentleman has not studied the question as closely as he has studied some others. I have felt it my duty to search into the history of the past. From 1832 to 1842 the Liberals were in power. In 1842 Sir R. Peel came into office, and what was the Liberal inheritance to which he succeeded? The condition of affairs was so serious that Sir W. Bowles felt it his duty to write a letter in September, 1844, to the First Lord of the Admiralty calling attention to the very serious danger which England had escaped in connection with the Syrian question. There was actually a plot for the seizure by the French Admiral Lalande of the English Fleet, because it was so weak in the Mediterranean. He had 10 vessels, while we had only 8; and it was proposed also to invade Ireland with an army of 30,000 men. That letter had a salutary influence, and important changes were effected, and the Navy was shortly afterwards increased. It is contrary to the fact, then, to say, as the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton has done, that the Liberals have always been in favour of a strong Navy. Naval men who have thought out the question and who are

prepared to give their lives for the country's honour, have a right to be listened to; and I say that the country has been living in a fool's paradise—it has been living upon its prestige since the old war, admiring the glorious days of Nelson, but not taking the necessary measures to keep up our naval strength and power in the present times. The necessity of doing that is as great now as it was in those days, and it is owing to our departure from the policy of our forefathers that we are now in our present position. I believe that the Government possess the confidence of the House, and that this modest proposal is sure to be adopted. I have myself such admiration for the Chancellor of the Exchequer that I am willing almost to accept anything which he proposes. Now, what are the financial arrangements? The hon. Member for Leicester and others talk about an extravagant expenditure, and I suppose they will go about stumping the country in the autumn denouncing this wicked Tory Government. The expenditure upon the Navy is to be £10,000,000 extra, and how does the Chancellor of the Exchequer propose to make up the deficit? The right hon. Gentleman proposes a small addition to the Beer Duty, which the brewers are kicking up a row about, and also 1 per cent extra Death Duty for all estates over £10,000. I look upon that as a splendid arrangement. None of us will feel the extra Death Duty while we are here; and when we have gone to our rest we need not trouble about it. Our heirs and descendants will have no grievance; indeed, there are no grievances at all about those proposals, which will work in the direction of national thrift. Lord Derby has told us that every man who saves money and puts by anything is a national benefactor. In this case people can insure their lives and pay a little extra, and when they go to their rest they will be looked upon as national benefactors, while the greatest benefactor, of all is the Chancellor of the Exchequer who is inducing them to do it. I approve of every proposal in the Bill from top to bottom, and if I can find any fault at all with it it is that it does not go quite far enough. All I can say is that the Government deserve hearty support. I believe that in the country, as well as in the House, they will receive that support and that the Bill will be passed by a large majority.

*Sir G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): Sir, if anybody but the gallant Admiral who has just sat down had made such statements as to the motives of those who oppose this Bill we certainly should have appealed to you for protection. I believe that one of the greatest rows that ever occurred in this House was on an occasion when Lord Althorp said about the Irish Members in very mild terms the same thing which the gallant Admiral has said in very strong terms on this occasion. But there is something about the hon. and gallant Admiral which always disarms resentment. The hon. and gallant Admiral says that the recommendations of the Committee which sat on the Navy Estimates for the increase of the Navy were not sufficient.

*Admiral FIELD: Not in terms.

*Sir G. TREVELYAN: Not in terms?

*Admiral FIELD: What I said was that the Committee on the Estimates virtually recommended the Board of Admiralty to increase the strength of the Navy.

*Sir G. TREVELYAN: The hon. and gallant Member referred to the important Committee which sat upon the Navy Estimates, and I understood him to imply that the Committee thought the Navy was insufficient. As a matter of fact, the Committee did not consider it within their competence to say whether the Navy was or was not sufficient. They certainly did not recommend what the gallant Admiral says is one of the principal merits of the Bill—namely, that the Government should pass a Bill that would take it out of the power of future Parliaments to alter their policy in the future, and that would enable the House of Lords to override any change of opinion in the House of Commons; and, above all, the Committee did not advise the Government to build ships out of borrowed money. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green says that this Bill has received very fair treatment. I think so, too. It did not meet with any vigorous opposition until the Second Reading; and some of us reserved our opposition until we were quite certain that the Bill would be insisted upon, in all of its most serious and objectionable details. But the more Gentlemen on this side looked at the Bill, the more they disliked it.

We dislike it most because it runs the nation into debt for services which ought to be paid out of the Estimates. I have here a Paper which the noble Lord has laid on the Table, giving a list of the obsolete ironclads in the Navy. I have looked at the dates at which those ironclads were completed, and I find that on an average this class of vessels have a life of 26 years. Now, I ask the House, is a ship with a life of 26 years a proper object for the borrowing of money with a view to its construction? But it is a much more serious matter when we go from the ironclads to the cruisers; and here I must ask the House to notice one argument which I do not think has been put very strongly before it up to the present moment. Now, here are eight cruisers which are now obsolete; that is to say, that will be obsolete, say, by the year 1890. Well, these cruisers were completed between the years 1874 and 1878; that is to say, that the life of a cruiser is, as every one who has paid attention to the subject knows, from about 11 to 13 years. This being so, what are we to say when we find Her Majesty's Government actually asking this House for powers enabling them to borrow money for the building of a number of ships whose average life will be from 11 to 13 years? Why, if this course is to be adopted, the next thing we may expect them to do will be to come and ask us to borrow money for the purchase of horses, or anything else that will only have a short existence. Now, Sir, I regard the principle involved in the course adopted by the Government as a most dangerous one. Up to the present time even the barracks of our marines have been built out of the ordinary estimates; and if we are going to adopt the principle that we should borrow money to build cruisers, I do not know where we shall stop. If we once adopt such a procedure we shall find that whenever the Military Secretary requires the means for a special expenditure—such, for instance, as new rifles or artillery—he will come down to the House and ask us to borrow the money needed. In the next place, I am extremely alarmed at one circumstance in connection with our finance. I observe that there is a spare sum of £3,054,000, which will be left in the hands of the Government over and above what is put down for the completion of their programme. Now, this will be spent in new shipbuilding, and I am very much afraid it will be spent in bad ships—for this reason: the thoughtful and hopeful part of the Government programme is that it appears to have been proved that they had at last come to the conclusion that they ought to do away with the small, slow gunboats which are of no use in peace and which would prove absolutely useless in war, and henceforth rely on ironclads and cruisers. But I find that during the last two years the Government have proposed to lay down no fewer than 15 of these old and useless gunboats. That being so, the noble Lord has gone back on the proposal of the Government with regard to these vessels—a class of boats whose speed is only some 13 or 14 knots, and which in time of war would have to keep away from the sea in order to avoid being taken off into the enemy's harbours. For my part, I do not like the idea of putting upwards of three millions of money into the hands of a Government which has not given up once and for ever this system of building small ships in order to create more commands. The hon. and gallant Admiral opposite has told us it is the naval men who ought to be our instructors in these matters; that we ought to obey them when they call on us to spend £21,000,000 on the increase of our fleet; but I am afraid that when we have spent that, they will only be asking for more, for I would remind the House that it was the naval men, not only in olden times, but still more recently, who insisted on successive Boards of Admiralty following the suicidal policy of building gunboats and other vessels that were, and are, of no use, either in peace or war. I trust that in the course of this debate we may have an emphatic declaration from the noble Lord on the part of the Government against this policy being continued. But the main object of the policy of the Government is that it will tie our hands in the most serious manner. Have hon. Members fully considered the fact that under the clauses of this Bill we are to lay down 10 ironclads all at once? Now, just think for a moment what this means! The *Audacious* and the *Invincible*, which were launched in 1870, were thought to be exceedingly fine ships, and at that

time I have no doubt people would have been very glad to have had 10 of the *Invincible* or *Audacious* class.

*Lord G. HAMILTON: You did build six of that class.

*Sir G. TREVELYAN: But my argument is as to building them all at once. If we had been asked to have built 10 ships of the *Invincible* type all at once what would have been our excuse for taking a course which would have incurred so enormous an expense when we remember what has subsequently happened? Well, Sir, in 1880 we built two other ships, the *Ajax* and the *Agamemnon*; but let us suppose we had built 10 *Ajaxes* and *Agamemnons*. Why, within a very few years we began to build on entirely different lines, and laid down an entirely different class of vessel—that is to say, we adopted the type of the *British Admiral*. Can the House conceive the position we should have been in if we had had 10 ships of the *Agamemnon* class on the stocks at a time when the most advanced and scientific knowledge in the country was in favour of building vessels after the model of the *British Admiral*? Or, to put it in another way, just fancy what would now have been thought if, two years ago, we had laid down 10 ironclads of the *Collingwood* and the *Benbow* class. In such a case, I suppose that not only the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cardiff (Sir E. Reed), but every other hon. Member who has any practical or scientific knowledge of naval construction, would have felt extremely disgusted when other ships of the *Nile* and *Trafalgar* class were proposed to be built, but could not be built because we had 10 of the *Admiral* class in hand; but yet, at the present moment it is proposed to build 10 ships all at once, which will cost, I suppose, something like £700,000 or £800,000 each. Nevertheless, it is, to my mind, a much more serious matter when we come to the cruisers. The House will have observed the enormous number of these vessels it is proposed to lay down, practically at once; for I feel sure that the Secretary to the Admiralty will not give out the contracts at a time when the market is unfavourable, but will carefully watch the market and see that, although the contracts must be put out in twelve months, it must be with as sparing a hand as possible. Well, it is proposed to lay down 42 cruisers all at once. Now, in 1880, there was a class of cruiser well-known as a good seaworthy class, which was in very high favour. They were of a speed of about 13 knots, and a great number of them were then built. In the year 1889 those ships are obsolete. They are no longer regarded as the proper type for cruisers, and I put it to the House, can you conceive what would have been the position of things at the present moment if, in 1880, we had laid down 42 cruisers of the then type of vessel? But that is the sort of thing the Government are proposing to do. The Admiralty, of course, got the best advice they could, and no doubt they very wisely used that advice in laying down, at the time it was given, a certain number of vessels of the class then accepted; but it is another thing to lay down so large a number as 42 ships all at one time. I now desire to put forward what are my principal financial objections to the Bill, and shall conclude by noticing a remark of the hon. and gallant Admiral opposite, which filled me with absolute consternation, but which, I have no doubt, contained a true prophecy. The hon. and gallant Gentleman said that naval men were satisfied with the expenditure as far as it went, but would soon be asking for more. There is no doubt that naval men will be right in asking for more if this Bill be passed; because, assuming that in four or five years' time these new cruisers will be as obsolete as those that have preceded them, the hon. and gallant Gentleman and his friends will come forward and say, "We have our docks filled with vessels of a peculiar and obsolete type; we must now have others of the newest type," and it will be very hard for the Admiralty to answer the demand. I must here express my regret that the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty Department has not stuck to a sentence which appeared in his printed statement last year—a sentence not used offhand in a speech, but printed and circulated as an official utterance. The noble Lord said:—

"The experience gained last year and the opportunities afforded during the time of making close and minute comparisons between the strength of the Navy of this country and that of foreign nations confirm my previous statement that our relative superiority is undoubted, and that we shall, if the present

expenditure be maintained, each year increase that superiority."

I think these were very manly words, and I am bound to say that I take exception to what was said by the hon. and gallant Admiral when he thought they were inconsistent with the ideas of our forefathers. The old English way of carrying on war was by making the Navy strong enough for defence, but not to block up every possible hole or loophole through which danger might come. They knew very well that if they went to war they must incur danger, and also begin by incurring a certain amount of loss; but, at the same time, they endeavoured to make themselves as formidable in an offensive manner as they possibly could, so that their adversary should beware of them, and should come out of the war in such a condition as to determine that he would never enter into another. I think it is a most futile thing to try and provide, either by sea or land, that at such or such a time war shall not be an imminent danger; because whatever you do you cannot succeed, and the result will be that you will only expend in time of peace the resources you ought to husband for time of war. I will here tell the House what passed between me and a very eminent sailor the other day, and I have no doubt, if I were to name who it was, that that sailor would be recognised as a very high authority, as well as one of the most spirited of our fighting tars. We were taking a long ride in the country, and we had two or three alarmists with us, out of whom that gallant sailor was very glad to take a little fun, and above all, he was pleased to encourage them in the proposal to spend money on the Navy. All through a two-hours' ride the alarmists continued to get more and more gloomy, while we began to make more and more admissions as to the weakness of our Navy; but as we came home again my friend the sailor said, "After all, if we did go to war, we should give any other Power the worst licking we ever gave them yet"—only he did not say "worst," but used a phrase that sounds more appropriate in the mouth of a gallant sailor than in mine. I believe that to be the opinion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite. My belief is that that is the spirit of the old Navy—namely, that it is desirable to make our Navy so strong as not only to enable us to conquer in the event of war, but also strong enough to prevent any other country being tempted to go to war with us; though, at the same time, we should not be so unwise as to think we can so strengthen it that if we should happen to go to war we should not incur any danger or loss, because that is impossible. In fact, I believe, according to the words used by the noble Lord, that our Fleet was in such a satisfactory state of strength before this immense expenditure was proposed, and, therefore, upon that ground, and because this large expenditure is founded on principles of administration and finance which I cannot possibly endorse, I shall vote against the Second Reading of the Bill.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The House will have noticed that in the various speeches that have been made since this Amendment was before us, we have only had the same arguments repeated over and over again; for, having had occasion to sit here and listen to more criticisms on the Bill than probably have been heard by any other Member of the House, I can say that, although hon. Members having strong objections to the measure have stated their case very fully, every argument used by the two first speakers in this debate was exhausted in the first speech made some little time ago by the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer), who made so able a statement of his position against our proposal, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer deemed it worthy of an immediate reply; and those who have listened to the subsequent debates will agree that the case of the Opposition has not been stated so well as when it was first put by the hon. Gentleman. But I may say that the speech of the hon. Gentleman, and those of every other Member entertaining the the same views, have all been vitiated by the admission that this country may at some time be in danger; yet at the same time the hon. Gentleman said we ought to wait till the danger was upon us.

MR. CREMER (Haggerston, Shoreditch): The noble Lord has not faithfully interpreted that portion of my speech to the House. What I said was that the House was warranted in demanding from the Government informa-

tion as to whether there was danger to be apprehended, and that unless proof was supplied that the danger was real, and not imaginary, we should be justified in declining to vote the money.

*Lord G. HAMILTON: I was only giving the sense and not the actual words of the argument of the hon. Gentleman, whose contention was, that when danger came upon us, then would be the time for us to act; and I say that there is no argument by which that proposition can be supported, because if there be one thing which has been more conclusively proved than another in regard to naval or military warfare either of old or recent date, it is the utter impossibility of making adequate arrangements on the spur of the moment, when danger is at hand. If this were so in the past, it is still more so at the present day, when the various nations of the world possess more powerful armaments, and are in a better state of preparation than formerly. The right hon. Gentleman who preceded me (Sir G. Trevelyan) has repeated at great length the arguments which had been stated before by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), who has over and over again raised the question about the number of ships to be laid down all at once. I admit that there is some force in that argument, and if time were not in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, a primary consideration, no doubt it would be preferable to adopt a more leisurely procedure. But as it is, we believe that the ships we propose to build should be completed by a certain period. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has stated that it is for the Executive alone to indicate the nature and extent of the forces they require; but whatever complaints and criticisms have been urged in regard to this proposal, no right hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House has attempted in any way to curtail the proportions of the scheme. All the objections they had made had been as to the method of finance by which we propose to provide the ways and means for carrying out our proposals. Now, Sir, it seems to me that the great difference between the proposals of the Government at the present moment and similar proposals made in former years is this: that no Government has ever suggested and brought before the House a scheme as to which every kind of information has been so fully detailed; because, in regard to this matter, I may say that to such an extent have the Government been desirous of taking the House into its confidence, that the only material Amendment to the Bill was one proposed by an hon. Member below the Gangway, who said that we had tied the hands of the Admiralty too much in our proposal to carry out greater efficiency in the maintenance of our Fleet. The fact is that if we had erred at all we had erred in giving too much information. In giving this information we desired that everyone in the House should know exactly what we propose in our scheme, so that they might give it their deliberate sanction, and when that scheme was sanctioned we were anxious that it should be carried out with as much rapidity as possible. But in past years the practise has been somewhat the reverse; it has been to get the House to assent to a scheme of shipbuilding, and when assented to, slowly to carry it out. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir G. Trevelyan) has called attention to a passage in a statement which I submitted to the House last year. I can only say that I repeat the statement, and have nothing to retract. As far as our naval strength is concerned, I believe we are superior to any of the other naval powers, and I believe also that we shall be still stronger next year than now. But, if the right hon. Gentleman had gone a little further, he would have seen that I spoke with extreme caution as to the protection of our commerce; and the views I then held have since been confirmed by the Naval Manœuvres. If we are right in strengthening our Fleet of cruisers, it is clearly essential that we should lose no time in adding to that portion of our Navy. There is, I admit, a difference between our action in the past and our proposals for the future. With regard to the scheme of the past, I was not responsible for its inception nor its scope; I have had nothing to do with it but to carry it out, and I have done so with as much rapidity as I could. But the present scheme is based on a different idea. It is entire in itself, it lays before the House all the details

in relation to it, and is a distinct advance on the proposals of previous Governments. We have endeavoured to accredit the scheme, not only by consulting as largely as we could our naval officers, but by also taking this House into our confidence; and the result has been that our proposals have received a greater amount of popular support than has been accorded to any scheme brought forward for many years past. This is shown by the attitude of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, for if they had thought the measure as unpopular as they pretend it to be, the opposition it would have met in its previous stages would have been of a very different character from that by which it has been met. I trust the House will now assent to the Third Reading of this Bill, and by so doing put on record their approval of a scheme, not the least merit of which is that it has been associated with an amount of publicity as to all its details, and a principle of procedure, which I hope will be followed in any future scheme of a similar character.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I should not have obtruded myself upon the House in this debate had not the First Lord chosen to fix on me as the person who was mainly and directly responsible for the insufficiency of the British Navy. Two or three days ago he made a speech in which he said that this Bill was specially constructed in order that security might be taken against me in the future. I am glad the noble Lord anticipates the early recurrence of a period when the Liberal Party will again be in the ascendant. Well, what is the noble Lord's case? He says the Liberal Government in 1886 ran down the Navy and left it in an inefficient condition, and that the person mainly responsible for that was the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had cut off the quick-firing ammunition. I am afraid I shall fall in the opinion of the First Lord when I tell him that I never heard of quick-firing ammunition. At any rate, that was a thing with which I had nothing to do. All I had to do was to provide the amount of money that was deemed to be requisite to give us an efficient Navy, it being for the person who was responsible for the Naval and Military expenditure to see how the money was spent. Now, what was the course which was taken by the Government, which is now charged with having made inadequate provision for the Navy of this country? The largest Naval expenditure that ever took place was in 1885, and a great part of that, although provided by us under a Vote of Credit, was expended under the administration of the noble Lord. In 1886, when we were responsible for bringing forward the Estimates, the noble Lord said they were abnormally high. Those are the Estimates for which he blames me, and he comes forward and says:—"You are the people who have left such a terribly insufficient Navy."

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I did not accuse the right hon. Gentleman of leaving a terribly insufficient Navy. I said that a large number of guns were ordered and the ammunition to render the guns efficient was struck out, and my authority for saying so was the right hon. Member for the Stirling Burghs, who implied, as the Minister for War stated, that that decision was deliberately arrived at by the Cabinet.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Then I fear I must also explain. These quick-firing guns and their ammunition are a constant armoury from which the noble Lord and his colleagues derive their weapons for attacking us; there is no lack of quick firing in that respect. What happened on the occasion referred to was this. The Secretary for War stated that the cutting-down of this quick-firing ammunition was the work of the War Office in reducing the Admiralty Estimates for the year. I corrected him, and explained that the Estimates as a whole had to be reduced from the original proposals as a matter of public policy, but that any particular reduction which was effected in the Estimate for Naval Ordnance was made with the consent and acquiescence, of course, of the First Lord of the Admiralty.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I cannot go into this question of the quick-firing guns. I must leave the War Office and the Admiralty to fight it out between them. I am simply speaking of the action of the Government of which I was a member and of the finance for which I was responsible, and what I affirm is that as regards the Naval expenditure of this country we did as much

and more than any Government had done in leaving an efficient Navy. And I will prove that from the mouth of the noble Lord himself. Within a few months of his coming into office, and when he must have known perfectly well what was the state of the Navy, the present First Lord stated at the Lord Mayor's banquet that the ships in commission, armoured and unarmoured, exceeded the combined force of the three greatest Naval Powers of Europe. That was his description of the condition of the Navy he had inherited from his predecessors. And yet now he goes about the country endeavouring to induce people to believe that Liberal Governments always run down the Navy. The gallant Admiral the Member for Eastbourne Division of Sussex used a curious illustration when he selected the year 1844—a date when the Tory Government had been three years in power.

*ADMIRAL FIELD: I quoted a letter on the subject written in 1844, but actually referring to the state of things prior to 1842.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I will prove my argument from the mouth of the noble Lord himself. It was his duty in 1887 to bring forward the Naval Estimates, and, remember, he had succeeded to a Government which had insufficiently provided for the Navy. And at that time he—or rather the Chancellor of the Exchequer—was in a more fortunate position than I was, for instead of a deficit he had a surplus. Was it not his duty to produce increased Estimates to make up the deficiency we had left behind us? Let us see what he did do. In the Memorandum prefixed to the Navy Estimates, the noble Lord said they showed a decrease of £793,000 as compared with the expenditure of the preceding year, and that the large augmentation of our fighting strength and the satisfactory condition of the Navy would render it possible with judicious management to associate for some time a reduction of expenditure with an increase of Naval efficiency. This, of course, was the result of what had been done under the Northbrook programme. I am bound to say that for a single year the noble Lord kept his pledges, for in 1888 he proposed a reduction of nearly a million in the Navy Estimates. Thus, although he charges us with having insufficiently provided for the Navy, he was able in two successive years to reduce the Estimates to this extent. When was it discovered the Navy was inefficient? In 1888 the First Sea Lord wanted only half-a-dozen fast cruizers. He was satisfied with everything on the 16th of June. Sir A. Hood on that date, in reply to Question No. 4,234, said he was satisfied with everything else. Then when was this enormous expenditure found to be necessary? The First Sea Lord was satisfied on the 16th June, and the First Lord of the Admiralty says the new plan was made in July. What an extraordinary thing! Could a great plan of this kind be made in two or three weeks? What discoveries were made in that interval? What does the noble Lord tell us? He says—"I learnt a lesson from the Autumn Manœuvres and that changed my mind." But the Autumn Manœuvres did not take place until after the scheme was produced.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I never said I changed my plans. I said my previous opinion was confirmed by the result of the Naval Manœuvres.

SIR W. HARCOURT: But how about the First Sea Lord? He said on the 16th June he was satisfied with everything at the Admiralty. Did not the noble Lord communicate his plans to the First Sea Lord? Surely the First Sea Lord never knew a proposal was to be made for a great increase in the Navy, or he would not have deceived the Committee. When was he told? The noble Lord tells us it was the finance of 1886 which had reduced the Navy into this condition. Really, Sir, anything more preposterous it seems to me impossible to conceive. The fact is, it was done at the last moment. We know what was the real cause of the change in the mind of the noble Lord. It was not the Autumn Manœuvres which changed the First Lord's mind; it was the "sweet little cherub that sits up aloft" who was behind him. It is all nonsense to talk about the plan being recommended by the responsible advisers of the Admiralty; it is nothing of the kind. The Navy, I am convinced, is still as strong as it was when it was described by the First Lord at the Lord Mayor's banquet, and if he did not in two years discover its defects, it was because they did not exist. I prefer to

take the deliberate convictions of the advisers of the Crown expressed through the First Sea Lord—and who has said pretty much the same thing ever since. He stated it before the Civil Engineers the other day, and I noticed that some newspaper demanded his instant dismissal. I believe these are the true convictions of the Government and their advisers on the subject, and, believing that this is an entirely artificial scare, I for one shall vote against the Third Reading.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): As the discussion would have to close in five minutes' time if the Third Reading is to be taken this evening, and as many Members desire to speak, I beg to move the Adjournment of the Debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Fenwick.*)

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I hope I may appeal to the House to give the Bill a Third Reading on the present occasion. My noble Friend purposely shortened his remarks in order to give the right hon. Member for Derby an opportunity, of which he has well availed himself, to express his views on the Third Reading of the Bill, which has been before the House in a great many stages. I appeal to hon. Members who have already expressed their views to allow those views to remain on record, and not again to repeat them, so as to greatly delay the business of the House. I should not ask hon. Members to do so if I did not feel that it is in the interests of the House itself that the Bill should now be read a third time.

*MR. STOREY (Sunderland): I did not intend to take any part in the debates on this Bill, but I am anxious to hear what answer the noble Lord has to make to the statements of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, as, in the absence of a satisfactory reply, I shall charge the Government with having imposed an absolutely unnecessary burden upon the people. [An hon. MEMBER: Talk it out.] I have never talked anything out in this House, and do not want to begin. The right hon. Gentleman is calling upon us for an extravagant expenditure, and in order that we may hear the answer to the instructive speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, I hope the First Lord of the Treasury will agree to the Adjournment of the Debate.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: My noble Friend is prevented by the Rules of the House from answering the right hon. Gentleman opposite.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The Secretary to the Admiralty can reply.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I requested my noble Friend to shorten his remarks in order to give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity to speak after him. I can only repeat it is not, therefore, in the power of my noble Friend to reply to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby.

SIR W. LAWSON: Is there no one on the Treasury Bench who knows anything about the Admiralty but the noble Lord? If so, we shall not at all object to his replying. I really think that a more monstrous proposition than to close this debate now I have never heard in this House. I hope the Government will have the decency to allow the debate to be adjourned.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): Many of us desired to speak on this Bill on the Second Reading, but the noble Lord took the extraordinary course, when he concluded his own speech, of moving the closure. I do, therefore, think we are justified in asking that the present debate be adjourned.

It being ten minutes to seven o'clock, the debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Mr. Speaker, the best proof that any proposal made by a Member of this House is a sound one is, that it meets with increasing favour among the constituencies. In 1883 when I put down a somewhat similar Motion, an hon. Member asked your predecessor in the Chair whether I was not guilty of high treason, or something of that sort. Your predecessor, of course, said I was not.

But when the Motion came on there were not 40 Members ready to make a House. Again, in 1885, when I obtained a day and found a considerable number of Members ready to support me, the Gentlemen of official light and leading on the Front Bench on my own side spoke and voted against the Motion. In 1888 I again obtained a day, and then the official Leaders of the Liberal Party spoke and voted for the Motion. My right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) said :—

"The first step we have to take is to affirm that the accident of birth confers no longer the right of legislating for a free and self-governing country."

Now, my proposal has never passed in this House, but it has done more than pass; it has been adopted as part and parcel of the political creed of the Liberal Party. Our hereditary legislators may still meet in another part of this building, but they read their fate in the writing on the wall. They know that they have been weighed in the Liberal balance and found wanting. They know that the Liberal decree has gone forth that their days are numbered. I suppose there is no gentleman, even the most ardent Conservative, who will deny that one day or other the Liberals will be in the ascendancy in the country and in this House; and Liberals know that their Leaders never vote in favour of any reform which they are not resolved to give legislative effect to. It is therefore certain that as soon as the Liberal Party come into power a Bill will be brought in by our Leaders, putting an end to the hereditary principle. Hereditary legislators and their friends in this House know perfectly well that they are doomed. They show that by their action. We have had a considerable number of Bills and projects to reform the other House introduced in this House during the century. Never was any proposal made in the other House to reform it—they were satisfied to remain as they were—until quite recently. No sooner had my proposal obtained the approval of the Liberals of the country than we had numberless projects of reform introduced in the House of Lords itself. We have had articles written by Peers and those who are going to be Peers, with what effect? To attempt to avert their doom by palliatives, compromises, and reforms. I am one of those who would always prefer to reform an ancient institution rather than to destroy it. I am one of those who hold to the alliance between tradition and progress so far as it is possible, but in this case reform is absolutely impossible. The hereditary principle is the very essence of the House of Lords, and holding as we do that that principle ought to be swept away, we cannot consent to any palliative or amendment or reform that leaves any part of that principle in existence. What are these proposals of reform that have been made? I think it was this year that a Bill was introduced into the House of Lords, in which it was proposed that the House should exercise a disciplinary power over its Members. It was urged that even in that excellent flock there are occasionally black sheep, and that these black sheep should be turned out by their colleagues. The proposal appears to me utterly absurd. The basis of the hereditary principle is that each Peer is an individual legislative unit. If you assert the right to deprive a Peer of his legislative functions because he happens to be a black sheep, you will find very soon that the country will go further and say "you want something more in legislators than the mere absence of demerits: you want something more than the fact that a legislator has neither been in the Divorce Court, nor in the Bankruptcy Court." Another proposal was to select in some sort of way some particular Peers, in order to maintain the hereditary principle, and to add elected Members. Why, this is still more absurd than the first proposal. I can understand an hereditary chamber or an elected chamber, but it is like mixing oil and vinegar to unite the two in the same chamber. The hereditary legislators would at once be swept away if they came into collision with the elected Peers. There is another plan—namely, that the country should elect a certain number of Peers. But if you have an elected House, why make it a qualification of a Member that he shall be a Peer? There is only one reason for it, and that is that some people have an idea that Peers have a property in legislating. I need hardly say that we do not accept that view. Now, the hon. Member for Southport, (Mr. Curzon), has put an Amendment on the Paper. He cannot move it, but,

no doubt he will speak upon it. I do not exactly know what the plan of the hon. Gentleman is, but if it is at all like what he suggested last year, it seems to me to come to this, that the hon. Gentleman feels it is unfair to deprive us of the light of his countenance, and that as he will in all probability one of these days be a Peer, it would be unfair to deprive the House of Lords of the light of his countenance. His plan, therefore, is that he should sit in either House of Parliament, or in both. In all these reforms the House will see that the hereditary principle is mitigated, but still maintained, and that the hereditary principle being maintained, the object of the reform is rather to strengthen the legislative powers of the House of Lords. I agree with Lord Salisbury, either leave the hereditary principle alone, or make a clean sweep of the whole thing. I am aware that on my own side the feeling is not unanimous in favour of the principle of one Chamber. I do not commit myself as to that. There is a great deal to be said in favour of two Chambers, provided they are not co-ordinate and co-legislative. There ought to be one popular Representative Assembly, and another Assembly to exercise some sort of control, and to hinder, if possible, hasty or impulsive legislation, and also to prevent the popular Assembly converting itself into a Convention. This doctrine may be fairly held by any Radical without impeachment of his Radicalism. The two most Democratic Constitutions in Europe are those of Switzerland and Norway. In both countries there are two Chambers. In the United States, the Senate very frequently throws out a Bill that is passed by the House of Representatives, and the President very often vetoes a Bill that has been passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives. Still, neither President, Senate, nor House of Representatives can pass a Bill which is regarded as contrary to the written Constitution; in that case the question is to be submitted to popular vote. In this country we have no written Constitution; the veto of the Crown has fallen into desuetude; but nevertheless I do not believe in the risks of hasty, impulsive legislation, because this House will have to give an account of what it does to the nation, and for that reason I have no fear that the House of Commons will ever be converted into a Convention. But there is the possible danger that the House might exceed its mandate, and I am strongly confirmed in that view by what goes on in the present Parliament, which, in my opinion, has grossly exceeded its mandate. If the House of Lords really fulfilled those modest functions which I think ought to be above all those of an Upper House, if it represented fairly the collective opinion of the country, if it were free from class influences, and Party bias, then in all probability the country would accept the fact of it being there, and would not insist on its abolition. My contention, however, is that the House of Lords never has been free from party and class bias, never has fairly represented the whole of the nation, and never has fulfilled the proper functions of an Upper House, while on many occasions its action has been positively pernicious. Mainly composed as it is of a territorial aristocracy, it is notoriously tenacious of the rights and privileges of its class. So it would be if if we had an Upper House composed exclusively of railway directors, or partizans, or if you like, of brewers. I know perfectly well that in theory the House of Lords is recruited not only from all classes, but from the wisest and best of all classes. But what is the fact? Statesmen whom it is desired to shelve are sent up to the House of Lords. Whenever a Party has been out of power for some time, you have a number of statesmen who have been very eminent, but for whom there may not be room in the Cabinet. Something must be done for them. Some kindness must be given them; they must receive some recognition. What is the recognition these extinct volcanoes receive? They are sent up to the House of Lords. The Upper House is also recruited from the ranks of country gentlemen, and you select those men who have spent most at elections, or given the largest sums to the general funds of their Party. Besides these you have the very rich men. It so happens that at the present time men seem to get rich by brewing beer and issuing loans; therefore, you have loanmongers and brewers whom you select from. I quite admit that occasionally able and clever men are sent up

to the House of Lords, but that, I suppose, is because there is some idea of leavening this indigestible legislative dough. But the curious thing is that although you may send plebeians up to the House of Lords, no sooner do they get there than they become more aristocratic than the descendants of the Crusaders; as a matter of fact, they do become descendants of the Crusaders. We seem to be able, like the Chinese, to ennoble the ancestors of these noblemen. I will give two instances. There was a very respectable gentleman, a very eminent gentleman, who brewed very excellent stout in Dublin—a Mr. Guinness. Mr. Guinness is sent up to the House of Lords. I do not know that he had done much for the country beyond brewing stout, but, I suppose it was felt something must be done for the middle class. No doubt it was said, "Here is a self made man; let us plebeianize that Assembly." What do I find in the pages of "Burke"? I find that a great mistake has been made in regard to this brewer. Mr. Guinness was not Guinness; his name in prehistoric ages was Magenniss, and this Magenniss who lived in these prehistoric ages was the Viscount Iveagh. Literally, this nobleman has been restored to his native nobility. Then, again, there is Sir Hardinge Giffard, an eminent and successful lawyer, who went to the House of Lords to sit on the Woolsack as Lord Halsbury. Turning once more to "Burke" I find that Baron Halsbury is descended from a union in the reign of Edward I. between an eminent gentleman named Giffard, which meant in that time "the Liberal," and the daughter of an eminent knight called Peter de Halsbury. I put it to the House, whether an Assembly thus composed and recruited is likely to be in touch with the country? Remember that one of the main objects of an Upper House is that it shall be able to decide whether we are going beyond the views of the electors. How on earth is the House of Lords to decide that? We have before us the fact that we have to be re-elected; surely, therefore, we must be more in touch with the country than these gentlemen. History has shown that whenever the House of Lords has thrown out a Bill on the ground that the country will go with them, they have been invariably in error. There was only one instance in the last 150 years of their having thrown out a Bill and the country having supported them in that action. I allude to Mr. Fox's East India Bill. The hereditary legislators are not only interested in maintaining their class rights and privileges, but they are also always legislating in order to secure a tactical advantage for the Party to which they belong. While it is considered necessary to have a House of Lords to keep a Radical Government in order, it is not considered necessary to keep the Tories in order, because, whenever there is a Conservative majority in the House of Commons, the House of Lords becomes a mere echo of the opinion of that majority in this House. I will exemplify what occurs by the course taken in Ireland during the last few years. I will show, in regard to Ireland, in the past, in the present, and in the avowed future, the House of Lords have acted, act, and intend to act, as Tory partizans. In 1881, as the House is well aware, there was a very large Liberal majority in this House. It was just after the elections that the Compensation for Disturbance Bill was brought in and carried through this House. I am not going to say whether the Bill was good or bad—that is not to the purpose for my illustration, but as a matter of fact, the Executive chosen by the majority felt that the Bill was necessary to quiet and pacify Ireland, and it was their view of their duty to call upon Parliament to pass that measure. It was thrown out in the House of Lords. What was the result of this? The Government had the responsibility of governing without the power of governing as they desired. Surely this is a most improper position. Now I take the present position. As the House knows, three years ago there was a General Election, and the elections to a great extent turned upon the question of Home Rule. Now hon. Gentlemen opposite need not cry "Oh, oh" at what I am going to say, for I am only saying what we think. The country had not had time to digest that excellent measure, the country was assured that there was some third course between coercion and Home Rule, and that if a Tory majority came into power that third course would be pursued. Again I am speaking of what we think.

We hold that the pledges given at the late General Election, and which led to the return of a Conservative majority, have been entirely violated; we hold that the majority were elected under false pretences; we also hold that the country has altered its opinion; that the country has had time to think over the matter; and the by-elections prove that if the country were consulted again there would be found—I will not say unanimous—but such an almost unanimous opinion and such a majority against the Government that they and their Liberal Unionist allies would almost disappear. We therefore think that three years is long enough to exercise coercion, and that the right to exercise it has been obtained under false pretences. We may be right or we may be wrong in that view, but I ask, is Lord Salisbury a fitting judge in his own case? For it must be remembered it is his own case. I assume for a moment that we are right. You see we have absolutely no sort of appeal to the House of Lords, and so far as we ourselves are concerned, the House of Lords does not exist. Lord Salisbury again and again says, "We have got a majority, and we do not care what the country thinks; we have got powers for six years; no matter what the by-elections may be, and no matter what may be the change of opinion in the country, we intend to have every day of our six years." This shows that Lord Salisbury considers that the House of Lords is merely a Committee of the Carlton Club. Now, I take the future. It is possible—I do not say it will occur—but it is possible we may win the next General Election; it is possible that Home Rule may be successfully put forward by us at the next General Election; well, in anticipation of that, what do the Members of the Government, the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) and others say? They say, "You need not think that if you carry the country, no matter what your your majority may be, you will pass a Home Rule Bill, you have to deal with the House of Lords. The House of Lords will throw it out; they will throw it out once, and they will throw it out twice." In this argument they show the permanent nature of the majority in the House of Lords, and the way in which the Conservatives use that majority for their own purposes. This argument has been brought forward as an electioneering argument to urge the country not to vote in favour of Home Rule under any impression that the question will be settled by their vote. No; they say, "You cannot do more than disturb political matters again, because no matter what the House of Commons does the House of Lords will throw back the Bill and force another General Election." So I say the House of Lords is a partizan Assembly, and does not act judicially in its position as arbiter between this House and the country; cannot be said to hold the balance evenly between the two Parties in the country, but, on the contrary, it acts as a partizan body. As I have shown, their Lordships boast and glory in the fact that they intend to act as partizans in the future. Now I take another instance from what occurred to-day. At our morning sitting the Naval Defence Bill was discussed. The object of that Bill is to increase the Navy and to throw the expenditure upon a series of years. Now I take this from a leading article in the *Times*, which I suppose we may take to be the Tory organ, and this is how the *Times* referred to the Bill on Tuesday:—

> "The merit of the Bill is that it proposes to subject Parliament to a certain amount of compulsion in regard both to the shipbuilding programme and to the financial provision for carrying it into effect."

Now, note the words "a certain amount of compulsion," and remember that compulsion is to be exercised not only upon this House, but upon the future House of Commons. Lord Salisbury is absolutely certain that he always will have and must have a majority in the other House, so that when he has passed this Bill through this House he not only deprives this House in future Sessions of exercising its free opinion in the voting of money, but he deprives the future House of Commons, with, it may be, a Liberal majority, and it may be opposed to this expenditure, of any possibility of exercising what I have always thought the particular function of this House, the control of national expenditure, and he does this by his control of the majority in the other House. But it is not only in political Bills, not only in class Bills, that the House of Lords flies in the face

of the country. I will again refer to what occurred last week. The Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, having passed this House, went up to the House of Lords. Now it cannot be said for a moment that this Bill was rejected because the legislation was hurried or impulsive. For 40 long years—with the exception of one Parliament—the representatives of the people have demanded that these restrictions upon marriage should be done away with. Why then did the House of Lords throw out the Bill? Not because they acted as guardians or representatives of the opinion of the country, they acted according to their own foolish opinions. Some of the Members of the House of Lords were, I suppose, influenced by the thought that they were not prepared to face the contingency of their sisters wishing to marry them, but what is remarkable is that the Constitution of this country absolutely gives the right to Lord Dudley, Lord Lurgan and other hereditary Biblical scholars of the same opinion to decide the theological point whether, if Moses forbad the Israelites on Mount Sinai to marry a deceased wife's sister, that commandment is obligatory upon Englishmen in the present century. One more objection against the system of hereditary legislators. Whenever a new Ministry is formed, from the fact of there being two Houses of Legislature, a considerable number of Ministers have to be solicited from the other House, and resulting from that fact we have not only hereditary legislators, we have also hereditary Ministers. Now, I am not finding fault with Ministers, but unquestionably this House is the centre of power, and all Ministers ought to be here, otherwise we cannot bring our arguments and influence to bear upon them. But we have to-day the Prime Minister, three Secretaries of State, and the Scotch Secretary of State in the other House. Let it be remembered we dare not allude to what is said by these Ministers when speaking in their official capacity in the other House. Is it possible then for us to debate general matters and the views of the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs with these restrictions? No, I say the Ministers ought to be here, and it is one reason why we should put an end to that House, that so long as it exists we must have a considerable number of Ministers there, and whenever there is a change of Ministry, there is a general scramble and grabbing on the part of noble Lords for places great and small. The Civil List is pledged. I have always thought it unfair to throw upon Her Majesty the onus of spending the whole of the amount, and a considerable part is spent on the House of Lords when a Party comes into power. There is one man gets £2,000 a year for walking about backwards with a staff, and several others get £700 for being Lords of the Chamber. Why, a little while ago an hon. Friend of mine proposed that we should receive some miserable and inadequate payment for our valuable services to the country here, and we were told the proposition was a monstrous one, not to be entertained, and that it would create a class of professional politicians. But what happens in the other House? There is a species of general lottery or a scramble, when there is a change of Party, for places big and small. Burke speaks of an aristocracy being a cheap defence of the country—defence it may be, though I doubt it; cheap it certainly is not. I only wish Lord Salisbury would be good enough to publish all the letters he gets from noble Lords when he comes into office and during the time he is in office—such abject demands for places of monetary value, that the country would rise in indignation to sweep away these Gentlemen. I have addressed most of the arguments I have used to Gentlemen on this side of the House, but if hon. Members opposite will try to rise above Party prejudice, I will explain to them why, if they are wise, they will vote in favour of my Resolution. I ask myself what I should do if were a Conservative and had to consider this Resolution, and I unhesitatingly reply, I should vote in favour of it. For some reason or other, the cleverest men of the Conservative Party are generally Members of the House of Lords. Why deprive yourselves of this debating power? Lord Salisbury and others, differ from them though we may, are certainly able statesmen and most able debaters, but you deprive yourselves entirely of this power. You have very often very good men in this House, Gentlemen who command the attention of the House and exercise influence here in the position to which they are

accustomed, but then they are suddenly swept away to the other House. Who is your most influential man here, and whom you humbly obey? The noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (Lord Hartington). I hope he will long remain amongst us, but it is possible at any time, seeing that the noble Lord must at some time succeed to a ducal title, he will disappear from this House. Now I say the Conservative Party do themselves great harm by depriving themselves of the influence and power of eminent noblemen by letting them go into the other House, for not only is their influence lost to this House, but it is lost to the country. Noble Lords are generally local magnates, and have a certain amount of prestige. Although prestige in favour of the House of Lords collectively has disappeared, I have no doubt that in country districts a good deal of prestige attaches to the position of noblemen. I am sorry that it should be so, but I have no doubt of the fact. They are generally possessors of a large amount of land, and are men of great fortunes, which, I quite admit, they usually spend generously. These gentlemen generally have great interest in their country, and as a fact—and I am speaking as a Conservative—they would be the very best candidates you could have. An hon. Friend of mine remarked to me that he was doubtful about the expediency of my Motion, because he said the Conservative Peers in the other House would make such good candidates for the Party. But I do not take that view, and certainly, if you deprive the Lords of their position in the other House, you ought to give them the opportunity of being elected like anybody else. I only call attention to this to show you how you lose influence in this House, and most certainly you lose influence in the country by maintaining the House of Lords, and not giving the Lords the right of election to this House, where their influence would be felt. Is it because of mere prejudice? Is it because you are the "silly Party," as John Stuart Mill once said you were, and you wish to qualify for that definition? Political battles are fought here, and upon the results of the elections the destinies of the country are decided. You seem to me to be like the commander of an army, who, when the country is invaded, moves off his troops from the field to a garrison behind him, depriving himself of the force with which he might win the battle. You may say, "All this is perfectly true, and we really do recognize the fact that the Lords are not angels, but we do not see how we are to replace them." Now, I will briefly show how you might do so. I am not putting this forward as a reply to the argument frequently used, that we must have a House of Lords, or some sort of Upper House. I say, abolish the hereditary nature of the House. Divide the country into 50 districts, and let each district each year, or rather the County Council in each county every year, elect one Member for three years. You would thus have a permanent Assembly, and it would be a popular Assembly. It would be permanent, for it would only be renewed every three years, and yet it would be altered each year by the current of public opinion to a very considerable extent. I would not have these gentlemen Ministers; they would not exercise any office of profit or trust; they would be what I may term passive citizens, and that would make them, if possible, independent. And what should be their functions? They would be very simple. They would have no legislative functions at all; they would not be allowed to originate legislative measures; they would be a controlling House. Suppose a Bill passes this House, they would deal with the Bill in one of two ways; they might pass it, or they might throw it out on a Second Reading. Let me suppose they throw it out. The Bill would then, without debate, go up to the House again in the next Session, and they might throw it out again; but remember, a third of the House would have been renewed, and public opinion would have the opportunity of acting on the views of the Upper House. If they persisted in throwing out the Bill during the whole period of one House of Lords, and still the Commons persisted, then the Bill would become law, without the assent of the other House. Or they might pass the Bill on a Second Reading, and go into Committee upon it, and move Amendments to it; but these would be only suggestive Amendments for us to consider, assent to, or refuse. But if a House of Lords, a popularly elected House, and renewed by a third each

year, were unanimous, or nearly so, in throwing out the Bill, that would lead Members of the House of Commons to doubt and hesitate and reconsider whether, after all, the Bill was desirable. The House of Commons would in the same way consider the Amendments, which, after fair debate, might have been moved in the other House, and in all probability some of those Amendments would recommend themselves to the wisdom of this House for adoption. I do not say that I have any great belief myself in an Upper House. I merely throw this out as a suggestion, to show that in many ways an Upper House might be constituted harmless for evil at least, and not so pernicious as the present House. You would get good men to serve, but you would not find men cajoling, intriguing, seeking in every possible way to become Members, as in the present House of Lords. You would find plenty of men ready to be elected; they would have an opportunity to air their eloquence, and to exercise indirect influence upon public affairs. But as I said, I am making a Conservative speech here. I wish hon. Members to realize that we, on this side of the House, we Radicals, are not in favour of change merely for the sake of change. We really have no sinister designs on law and order, or the rights of property. We are just as anxious as hon. Gentlemen opposite to preserve all that is worth preserving. We regard law and order and the rights of property as the necessary basis of national prosperity; but the difference between us and hon. Gentlemen opposite is, that we do not mistake the means for the end. We do not put the good democratic wine of the nineteenth century into the bottles of the Crusaders. Whether we should have, or should not have, an Upper House is not the question you are asked to decide to-night. What I assert is that the system of hereditary legislation is in direct antagonism to the spirit of the age, and every day it will get more and more into antagonism with the spirit of the age, for the people are becoming more intelligent; they think and read more, and more clearly perceive the utter absurdity of a great nation sending representatives to this House and allowing their decisions to be overruled by the hereditary legislators in the other House. I am not asking any Gentlemen to vote in favour of any suggestion for another House, or in favour of one House or two Houses. All I ask the House to declare is, that in their opinion the accident of birth, as was very well said last year by the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley), ought not to give any one the right to legislate in a free and self-governing country.

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, it is contrary to the true principles of Representative Government, and injurious to their efficiency, that any person should sit and vote in Parliament by right of birth, and it is therefore desirable to put an end to any such existing rights.'"—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*Mr. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.): My excuse for asking the indulgence of the House while I make a few observations in support of the Resolution of the hon. Member for Northampton must be that I have had a Motion on the Notice Paper since the beginning of the Session attacking the hereditary principle from a different point of the compass, and that I was successful in obtaining a first place for it, which I lost by the alteration made in the Easter Recess, and this was specially brought about by the activity of the hon. Member for Northampton himself. I might be successful in a future ballot, but I am very unwilling to take up the time of the House with another discussion of this principle. Now, it seems to me we cannot properly understand the direction of the Resolution that has been proposed without looking at it in the light of the Amendment that has been set down in connection with it, an Amendment of a very remarkable character, if I rightly understand it. That Amendment, while it seems to admit there is a certain element of evil in the hereditary principle, makes proposals which, unless I misunderstand them, would tend to intensify that evil. We are offered what is called a "Representative Peerage," which, as I understand it, means that, instead of being lorded over by 500 hereditary legislators, we are to be subjected to, say, 250 elected by the others. Now, I say that is worse than ever. Five

hundred is two times nearer to democracy than 250. The complaint we make is, that we are lorded over by a small, narrow, privileged body, and we are told that the matter is to be mended by handing us over to a still smaller body of the same privileged description. We complain that there is a certain poison in the political body, and we are told that the best antidote is a quintessence of the poison itself; but I do not understand, and I do not believe in such a system of political therapeutics. Then we are further told we shall have the system of Hereditary Peerages diluted by a large infusion of Life Peerages. But are you going to dilute it? To my mind, you are rather going to thicken it, because the appointment of new Life Peers is not to be by the representatives of the people as I understand it, but by the representatives and friends of the ascendant and privileged class. On what principle would they be appointed? On the principle that they will be thought the most fit persons to be in the company of that very hereditary class of which we complain. It is not only retaining the original evil, but adding an imitation of the original evil. I would rather, for my part, have the original evil than the imitation. Selected as I believe these Life Peers would be. I think these new Life Peers would simply be the old Hereditary Peers "writ large." If my rights and my independence are to be sold over my head, I would rather they were sold for the old gold coins than for the new gilt brass counters. The Amendment seems to me to indicate a more uncompromising contention for the hereditary legislative principle than a simple Motion for the rejection of the Resolution; so that I think we are bound to look somewhat carefully into the question what amount of soundness and validity there is in this so-called hereditary principle which is so stoutly stickled for by the Party whom I may safely call hereditarians. If our hereditary friends mean simply that it is a great recommendation and an advantage for a man to have had a distinguished father, then I am disposed to agree with them, though I think it would be still more advantageous to him to have had a distinguished mother. But apart from that, I admit that your well-born man, given self-control, has every chance to dominate and shine in life contrasted with your base-born man. I am willing to admit that that is so, but, I ask, is that any reason for giving to him, in addition to the advantages which Nature and Fortune have bestowed upon him, the power of fashioning the laws of the country in favour of himself, and to the exclusion and disadvantage of the other competitor? If one man happens to be born in the purple and another in the hodden grey, why should the law step in to give the purple man its assistance, with the accompanying result of further handicapping the hodden grey man? If there is to be any interference of the law with the course of Nature, is it not a reasonable thing that the advantage should be given to the hodden grey man to redress the unfortunate turn of the balance which Nature has made against him? But perhaps our hereditarian friends may say that this is scarcely a fair way of putting the matter. What they say is, that the law of heredity being a great and unassailable fact of Nature and principle of science, given a distinguished ancestry, that law of heredity guarantees a distinguished line of succession. On that I wish to remark that that is too vague a way of stating the matter to suit the present case. The version of the law of heredity which our hereditarian friends are bound to defend on this occasion is, that it is a law of Nature, as well as a principle of the British Constitution, that, given legislative capacity in an ancestor, that legislative capacity infallibly descends in tail male general. That is the proposition which they require to make good. Now, I have paid some little attention to this matter. I have endeavoured to understand the works of Darwin and others, but I have found nothing in the experiments and conclusions of these distinguished men of science to justify the assertion that the law of heredity guarantees the transmission of any specialized acquirements, faculties, or functions. Bees, possibly, may have hexagons in the bloods, though certain apiologists give a simpler explanation, and the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) may, perhaps, be able to tell us whether among the ant tribes the faculty of grain gathering

and munching is infallibly bequeathed from feeding sire to son; but however that may be, in the higher creatures, given ordinary favourable conditions, you may fairly enough reckon upon the transmission of general energy and general characteristics, but that you cannot reckon upon the regular transmission of specialized aptitudes, fitnesses, and faculties. I am perfectly prepared to admit that this law thus stated is well illustrated in the existing condition of the membership of the Hereditary Peerage. I suppose that no man ever made his way originally as a legislator into the House of Lords who had not some force and strength of character—a force and strength ranging between the leonine and the vulpine type. I admit that you will still find the general energy of the ancestors to be exemplified in their descendants. Let hon. Members go to Ascot or Henley, to the hunting-field, or to the autumnal moor, to local business or agriculture, to charitable meetings, or even sometimes to literature and science, go to the battlefield, and to their scenes of pleasure, whether of the conventional or Corinthian order, and they will find abundance of energy displayed by the descendants of Peers; but it is not the special kind of energy which is required in Select Committees and on the floor of the House. It is the transmission of that special kind of special energy, and of that kind alone which you are required to make good, if you are to maintain the proposition which the necessity of your logical position imposes upon you. Why, it would be impossible, I presume, and it might not be very improper, to secure and ennoble and endow the greatest fiddler of the century, but the process would not entail a succession of greatest fiddlers. If Queen Elizabeth had created a Baron Shakespeare of Stratford, I suppose we should have had a succession of lively and versatile gentlemen, but I do not think we should have secured even a second repetition of *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*. If the principle contended for is sound, why should it be limited to the feudal magnates of the Hereditary Chamber? Why are the Bishops to be deserted by the principle of heredity? Is this, too, part of the revenge which science is taking upon theology? Why should not the son of a Bishop be born, say, an Archdeacon, and perform Archidiaconal functions in his cradle? I am prepared to go further. Here are we, the Members of the House of Commons, in this advanced year of grace, stamped by the nation with the seal of the highest attainable legislative competency, whatever foolish outside criticism may say, and I suggest to Her Majesty's Government that they should seize the occasion in the name of the great law of heredity to secure once and forever for the advantage of the nation an infallible succession of the best possible legislators by settling our seats upon us not merely until the end of the septennate, but in fee simple; thus among other gains providing for their children and childrens' children—such amusement as playing political blind man's buff among sugar barrels or blowing soap bubble navies to be exploded by the first breath of new invention, or trying to conciliate unhappy and unsatisfied nationalities by perennial courses of bayonets and battering rams. Sir, I should not appear for a moment to trifle with this subject were I not convinced that the idea we are discussing is itself trifling and absurd. I do not believe that the principle of heredity, the scientific principle of heredity, can be properly invoked in this cause, and I never will believe it until it has been certified to me by say, the Royal Society or by a Select Committee of this House. But this is not merely a question of Academic interest. It is franght with and followed by disastrous practical consequences and concomitants. The false relations which have been produced by a misapplication of this natural law in our social connections are of very grave significance. The relations between plebeian and patrician throughout the English-speaking communities are directly traceable to this institution of the hereditary power of legislation. The calm assumption of lordly superiority on the one hand, and the cringing servility and fawning obsequiousness expected, and too often conceded on the other, are, to my mind, a class of most distressing phenomena. That a cipher should be able to stand up in this country and say to multitudes of his fellow-beings, "Oh ye multitudes, I am my father's son, there-

fore revere me, oh ye multitudes!" and that the multitudes, instead of treating the proposition with indignant derision, should go down on their knees and lift up their hands and say, "Oh, cipher, thou art thy father's son, and therefore we revere thee, oh cipher!" is a saddening spectacle to a serious mind; and yet this is the direct consequence of your having instituted an order of men who are supposed by the mere fact of birth to be possessed of what is probably the highest faculty human or divine, the faculty of making wise and righteous laws for the regulation of human life. Then, Sir, another argument that is advanced for retaining the institution of hereditary legislators, is that in that way the ascendancy of birth can be used for the purpose of correcting what is supposed to be the degrading and vulgarizing ascendancy of wealth. In other words, the Lords are supposed to be our salvation from the millionaires. But in practice, so far from birth acting as a corrective to wealth, there is nothing that birth is so active about as seeking to ally itself with wealth, so as to give us the two evils combined. Worse still than that is the temptation which hereditary power and birth, with their privileges, are continually offering to wealth to withdraw it from its true duty to labour, and to fix a vain and selfish ambition on the attainment of hereditary honours and powers. Ever since the days when Mr. Pitt declared that wealth was in itself a proper passport to nobility, and, if I recollect right, that every man with £10,000 a year had a right to be made a Peer in due time, the ambition of the average-minded plutocrat has been fixed upon a coronet. I do not say that there have not been among this class men of a true nobility of nature that placed them above such ambition. I believe, indeed, that there have been capitalists, who are worthily represented in this House now, who have refused Peerages, and were content to remain as beneficent captains of industry, and all honour to them for their wisdom and self-abnegation. But such men are the exception, and not the rule. For usually no sooner has your colossal stock manipulator, or Titanic iron master, or mammoth manufacturer of soap, or of mustard, or of blacking, or of pills, or of any other eatable or drinkable, or usable abomination succeeded in gathering together the necessary number of hundreds of thousands of pounds than he casts about for the ways and means of becoming a Baron. Not unfrequently he pays his way, or paves it to his object. Straightway, as my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has so picturesquely described, the Herald's College discovers for him an illustrious pedigree going back to Henry VIII., or the Conqueror, according to the fee; and in an incredibly short space of time the new and noble Lord is prancing about surrounded by a cockaded and plush-clad legion, and ordering humbler mortals about, with an awe-inspiring mien that Nebuchadnezzar or Louis XIV. would have emulated in vain. Birth, as a corrective of wealth, is a very doubtful matter. I have less respect for birth than for wealth, if respect is due to either, where at least it can be said of it that it is the legitimate outcome of a man's own energy. If it is foolish and mean to respect a man merely on account of his wealth, I say it is not by any means the height of wisdom and magnanimity to respect a man merely because he happens to be the son of his father. Things are not improved or to be made better by substituting one form of nonsense for another. Beelzebub in blue is not a bit less objectionable than Beelzebub in black, and we all know that it has been settled long ago that we cannot cast out Beelzebub by Beelzebub. No, Sir; if there is any danger of falling into a demoralizing worship of wealth, the only corrective is to be found in poor men having the bravery to worship virtue, truth, and manliness instead. A poet whom I am not ashamed to quote in this House said:—

> "Is there for honest poverty,
> That hangs his head, and a' that?
> The coward slave, we pass him by,
> And dare be free, for a' that!"

That is the spirit in which to meet any demoralizing tendency there may be in the threatened worship of wealth, but not by trying to keep alive the exploded folly of hereditary honour and hereditary legislative power. And now, as one concluding word, it is urged that we ought to keep up hereditary legislative institutions to be a counterpoise to

democracy; but I take upon myself to say in the name of democracy that it is exceedingly obliged to its friends, but it does not need any counterpoise of that kind. If democracy discovers that it requires any counterpoise in the legislative machinery by which it works out its aims and secures its progress, it will construct a counterpoise for itself, but it will not be one that is made against itself and in the interest of a specially privileged class, but one that will be under its own control and fashioned in its own interests, which I need not say are the interests of all. I have much pleasure in seconding the Resolution.

*Mr. CURZON (Lancashire, Southport): I understand that the forms of the House will prevent the Amendment of which I have given notice from being put, but I have placed it on the Paper in order to express the opinions of, I believe, a good many Members who desire to meet with something more than a mere negative the confiscatory proposal of the hon. Member for Northampton, and who wish to express their opinion that a judicious reform of the House of Lords is possible, and that the hour for that reform has struck. The House has just listened to two ingenious and amusing speeches, and I am sure it will desire to congratulate the hon. Member for Northampton on the fertility of imagination which enables him year after year to present in a new dress the same old facts, or perhaps I ought rather to say fictions, and the same old arguments or fallacies which we have so often heard before. Of the arguments that have been submitted by the hon. Member, some were, I think, irrelevant, others worthless, and some were both irrelevant and worthless. I take as a sample of the hon. Member's irrelevant arguments the personal reference which he made to two noble Lords, one of them a very capable man of business, Lord Ardilaun, and the other a most distinguished lawyer, Lord Halsbury. The only objection which the hon. Gentleman found to them was that they had an unsuspected pedigree; but the hon. Member for Northampton himself may be the unconscious possessor of a similar distinction, because, although it may not be possible for him to trace his ancestry as far back as the Crusaders, it ought not to be difficult for him to establish a lineal connection with Jack Cade. I take as a sample of the worthless arguments used, the assertion that there is a permanent Conservative majority in the House of Lords. Why, such a character is the necessary and differentiating attribute of every Second Chamber in the world. You will not find any Second Chamber constituted on the basis of property or ability, or wealth, where there is not a decided Conservative predominance. And these are the factors on which they are invariably based. The Senate of the United States, the most competent Second Chamber in the world, consists, almost without exception, of wealthy men with a great stake in the country. But if this charge be advanced on whom does the responsibility rest for the constitution of the present House of Peers? Three hundred Peers have been created during the reign of the Queen, over 200 of them by Liberal Leaders, and nearly 80 by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. In the invigorating atmosphere of the House of Lords, most of these Peers have shaken off the bonds of servility which they contracted in this House, and it is they who constitute the permanent Conservative majority of which the hon. Member complains. It is an irrelevant and worthless argument to refer to the payment received by Peers as Members of the Government or of the Royal Household. Liberal Peers do not refuse such salaries, and I have even heard of some who do their best to pocket pensions in addition. Lately, indeed, it has been argued on the same grounds that all Members of this House should be paid; and now precisely the same reasons which were adduced to justify the payment of all Members in the House of Commons are used to justify the extinction of the House of Lords. The hon. Member for Northampton spoke of his proposal having received the endorsement of the Leaders of his Party, but let him not push his elation too far, for there is a memorable phrase defining Liberal responsibility in Opposition as "a position of greater freedom and less responsibility," and, indeed, the hon. Member for Derby last year pointed out that, in supporting the equivalent of this Motion, he voted for nothing more than that the Speaker should not leave the Chair. It is said that the hereditary

system is contrary to the true principles of Representative Government; but the latter have not been defined, and I protest against the assumption that they are only, or necessarily, to be vindicated by the elective method. Representation describes an end without laying down any laws as to the means of attaining it. And the hereditary principle has furnished the method by which interests not otherwise represented have secured representation in the Parliament of this country. I deny altogether that the operation of this principle has been found injurious. It would be foolish to contend that if we were forming a House of Lords now, we should frame it wholly or mainly on the hereditary principle. Of course, we should do nothing of the kind. But we are not now starting with a clean slate, and we must take things more or less as we find them. The hereditary principle was never enacted by Parliament; it has not sprung from the brain of any statesman; for centuries it was in abeyance in the House of Lords, but slowly and imperceptibly it became a feature in the constitution of that House, establishing itself as a rough-and-ready method of selection, and concentrating in the House of Lords a great deal of ability and influence representative of the property of the country. The hereditary principle has given England what no other country in Europe enjoys—a nobility worthy of the name, and a social order admired at home and abroad. It has saved this country from the corroding influence of unstinted riches; it has supplied a succession of statesmen who have transmitted from generation to generation the tastes and talents of public life and a House of Lords which has played no small part in the building up of the fabric of the British Empire. That it has rendered these services to the country not even the most bigoted disciple of democracy can deny. The democratic tendency of this age does not make the House of Lords a greater anomaly. Constitutional uniformity is not a political *desideratum*, and the excellence of our Constitution lies in the happy *concordia discors* by which it is characterized. The wider the extension of the franchise, and the more numerous the grants of Local Government the greater the need for a balancing power differently constituted and owning a different sanction, to save our Parliament from falling to the low level of impotent uniformity in which the Parliamentary institutions of other countries are sunk. Look at the Constitutional offspring to which the mind of the hon. Member for Northampton has given birth. It is to contain 150 Members elected by County Councils. That is a respectable, but certainly not a dignified or an ancient origin. As to its functions, its powers of amendment are to be absolutely *nil*, but its powers of rejection unlimited, so that Bills about which there is a serious difference between the two Houses would infallibly be rejected. There would soon be a wave of popular indignation against the Laboucherean Second Chamber, and the first General Election would bring it to the ground. The scheme starts in revolution and ends in chaos. It is assumed that the present House of Lords is to be got rid of, but its Members are not such fools as to sign their own death warrant. If they can only be got rid of by revolution, where is the Leader—the Caius Gracchus, or the Oliver Cromwell? The hon. Member for Northampton will hardly play the part of the former, although he may ultimately share the same fate; nor is he precisely a nineteenth century counterpart of Oliver Cromwell, who began by sweeping away the House of Lords.

*MR. STOREY (Sunderland): I beg pardon, but it certainly is not true that Oliver Cromwell swept away the House of Lords. It was done by a Vote of the House of Commons.

*MR. CURZON: The hon. Member has only to refer to the most elementary school manual of history, if it can be found in the library of his house, in order to see his mistake. Within a week of the execution of Charles I., Cromwell swept away the House of Lords, but no sooner had he done so than he was compelled to set up a successor in order to balance the too powerful influence of the House of Commons. He was thus driven to the creation of a new House of Lords, and in order to ensure its political subserviency, he had to associate with it his own sons and sons-in-law and brothers-in-law, and in that way made it, in reality, quite a family party. The fact is, that this phantom Cromwellian House of Lords

was, after a miserable existence of a few years, swept away to give place to a restoration of its legitimate predecessor. I only quote this, in order to illustrate the absolute fatuity of attempting by a stroke either of the sword or the pen to destroy an integral part of the Constitution, and replace it with some mushroom chamber such as that which the hon. Member for Northampton suggests. Nothing can be more certain than this, that whatever shape the House of Lords may take in the future, it will be inseparably connected with the past. There will be no great gap or division between the two systems. It will be by adaptation, modification, and purification, but not by cynical destruction, that you will get a new House of Lords such as will better correspond with the needs of the times and the wants of the people. And yet, Sir, I would desire to welcome the suggestion which has fallen from the hon. Member to-night as marking a distinct stage of advance in the history of this controversy. It shows not merely that the hon Member, in the maturity of his years, has repented some of the hot-headed indiscretions of his youth, not merely that he has recanted the unicameral heresy, but that he has passed from the destructive to the constructive phase of political existence. There are other omens which point in the same direction. An eminent and accomplished nobleman, Lord Rosebery, has addressed himself to the reform of the House of Lords with that serious statesmanship which we have learned to associate with his name. Another distinguished nobleman, Lord Dunraven, introduced a Bill last year against which no one can bring the reproach that it erred on the side of Conservatism. I see sitting on one of the opposite Benches, the hon. member for Aberdeen, who, some years ago, wrote a most instructive and interesting article in one of the magazines on the reform of the House of Lords, and, again, a right hon. Gentleman, a Member of the present Cabinet, the Member for Bristol (Sir M. Hicks Beach), has spoken out on this question in most clear and unambiguous tones. Moreover, the Lords themselves have abandoned the attitude of *non possumus* which they took up in 1856, 1869 and 1885; and last year we had the Prime Minister himself introducing a Bill which, whatever its demerits, was a step in the right direction. This movement exists not only amongst Conservatives and Peers, but indications of it are visible elsewhere. I suppose there was in this House no more bitter opponent of the House of Lords than the late Mr. John Bright. There are on record many hard sayings of Mr. Bright in reference to that Chamber. I remember meeting Mr. Bright last year, just after I had contributed to a magazine some suggestions for the reform of the House of Lords, and Mr. Bright, taking up the question, astonished me by saying that he also was in favour of the reform of that House. He spoke with great disrespect of all the schemes, including my own, which had been advanced for its reform. The amazing thing, however, about Mr. Bright's own proposal was that the House of Lords should be a territorial and property-representing House, elected by a high property franchise, among the county voters of England—in other words, the class of men elected to that House should be drawn from the land-owning class, or the class whose wealth and position give them a very large stake in the country. Whatever the intrinsic merits or demerits of that proposal I regard it as most significant in marking the drift of public opinion, even among the Radical Party. But, Sir, I may be called upon to state the reforms which we desire to present. In my Amendment I have asked the House to say that hereditary rights might with advantage be modified, by extending the principle both of Life and Representative Peerages in the House of Lords. I will endeavour to explain what I mean. By Life Peerages I mean something much more advanced than the petty and tinkering schemes which have so far been introduced or carried into law. Three times during the last twenty years proposals have been made to add Life Peers to the House of Lords. The first occasion was in 1869 when a Bill was introduced by Lord Russell, which, however, was defeated in its later stages in that House; the second was in 1876, when, on the initiative of Lord Cairns, a measure was carried, by which four Life Peers were added as Lords of Appeal in Ordinary to the House of Lords; and the third occasion was last year, when

a Bill was introduced by the Prime Minister, but subsequently withdrawn. The proposals both of Lord Russell and Lord Salisbury are very much on the same lines; both of them are paltry and peddling measures of reform, and scarcely worthy of the name. Both of them involved the introduction into the House of Lords of a limited number of Peers, drawn from the ranks of eminent men. Lord Salisbury proposed that 30 Life Peers should be added to the House of Lords from the class of distinguished Generals, Admirals, Civil Servants, Governors, and Ambassadors, and that 20 Life Peers should be sent to that Assembly from other classes. There are plenty of Generals and Admirals in the House of Lords already, and I do not think you would strengthen that House by adding to their number, nor do I see that the rejection of a Bill by the House of Lords would be made one whit more palatable, because so many Generals, Admirals, Ambassadors, and Governors had voted against it. Moreover, I do not see why you should take steps to increase the average age of the House of Lords. We do not want a House of Lords which is to be a museum of magnificent ruins. Still less do I approve of proposals to increase the number of Life Peers by the addition of distinguished representatives of literature, science and art—professors, painters, actors and poets. You would not strengthen, but would be much more likely to weaken, that legislative Chamber by attempting to graft upon it a kind of spurious French Academy. What we want to do is to make the House of Lords more representative of all classes and all interests. It ought to be much more than a mere assembly of notables, or club of landlords, or even a kind of dignified siding on to which are shunted the worn out or superfluous trucks of the Parliamentary train. Why should we not, by means of Life Peerages, make the House of Lords representative of the middle classes of this country, and even of the labouring classes too, and of the dissenting denominations, and, more that that, of every branch of industry and business? There are many men who are now debarred from accepting a Hereditary Peerage by the want of means, or from entering this House by the want of opportunity or inclination. You might admit such men by means of Life Peerages, and I do not see why young men should be excluded. You might by means of Life Peerages answer the purpose which many years ago was fulfilled by the system of private boroughs—a system which, with all its defects, was an excellent one for introducing into public life young men who were without any other opportunity of entering that arena. And it might possibly be well to extend the Life Peerage system to Representatives of the Colonies, because by that means you would not only quicken their loyalty, but you would afford opportunities for the expression of Colonial opinion on Imperial matters. Next as regards the extension of Representative Peerages. May I point out to the House that there are already Representative Peers in the House of Lords. The Bishops sit there as Representatives of their Dioceses. Sixteen Scotch and 28 Irish Peers sit there as the elected representatives of the larger constituency of Peers, who inherit their titles and the right to elect representatives, but who do not inherit the right to sit and vote themselves. I do not say that I approve of the system by which the Irish and Scotch Peers are elected, but I think the principle itself is a sound one which might be extended. One of the commonest charges made against the House of Lords is that it contains a number of men, unfitted by taste, occupation, or character from acting as members of a Legislative Assembly. I think the charge as to moral character has been very much exaggerated. The number of black sheep is of minute and almost microscopical dimensions. Such Peers can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and they take no part in the Debates and Divisions of the House of Lords. But if the number of black sheep is insignificant, it may justly be said that the number of what I may perhaps call piebald sheep, sheep which are neither black nor white, is larger than it ought to be. I speak of the idler, the spendthrift, and the habitual absentee. These men are not a credit to the House of Lords, although they are seldom seen within the walls of that House. I should like to see the number of these men reduced. There need be no confiscation—all the existing Peers might retain their titles. But the right to sit and vote should

be confined to Peers who have done some work or have been elected as representatives of their own order or of some constituency not yet determined. Thus a double advantage would be secured. There would be a house of working bees, not drones, and the House would be reduced to manageable dimensions. It is not for me to stand here and discuss proposals for the reduction of the hereditary element. Various schemes have been suggested. The principle of delegation is favoured by some, but of that I am not much enamoured. The spectacle of an Inner House elected by an Outer House—a close corporation co-opting a still closer corporation—is not likely to disarm popular criticism. The system which I should favour myself, and which I have expounded elsewhere, is one under which, by an automatic test, those Peers alone should be entitled to sit in the House of Lords who had qualified, either as Members of this House, or by previous employment in the Public or Civil Service of this country. In this way we should retain the best and exclude the inferior men. The hereditary principle would be based not upon privilege, as now, but upon worth, and men would feel that they sit in the House of Lords not simply as the sons of their fathers, but because they have done something or are somebody themselves. Well, Sir, I apologise for having detained the House with this suggestion. I remember that last year we were taunted—I believe by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle—with not having a definite scheme. I have therefore shadowed forth one by which we can, I think, effect a substantial reduction of the hereditary element in the House of Lords, and by an increase of Life Peers, and an extension of representative Peerages may so shape the House of Lords as to respond to the needs of the time and of the country. I confess I cannot look to the future of the House of Lords as it at present stands without apprehension. Matters are very quiet now—under the best possible of Governments we are having a quiet time. But it is possible that in the future a thoroughly bad Government may be seated on that Bench. It is possible that the hon. Member for Northampton may himself be sitting there. [*Cries of* "Which"?] Both. If we can for a moment contemplate such a contingency—extremely remote, no doubt—I can imagine that an unreformed House of Lords might be swept away by a wave of great popular excitement before we knew where we were. I cannot imagine any greater danger than that any country should be brought face to face with the irresponsible and frivolous tyranny of a single democratic Chamber. That is what we may have to face, and what I cannot contemplate with equanimity. It is for these reasons that I desire a House of Lords representative, not merely of land, or blue blood, or the Church, but of all classes and interests in the country. We want a House not solely hereditary, but one in which men shall feel that they have won their promotion, and strong enough—I do not say to wrestle with or combat this House, but to balance the overweening power of an unrestrained House of Commons. I am aware my proposal may not receive the co-operation of hon. Members below the gangway opposite. But I do hope that there are in other parts of this House hon. Members to whom the idea of reform in some such shape will prove acceptable. Whether that be so or not, I am convinced of one thing, and that is that the reform of the House of Lords should be initiated and undertaken by the Conservative Party.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I think there is something rather appropriate in my following the hon. Member, for we represent different classes of society. I have been exceedingly amused with the speech of the hon. Member, which has presented what may be called dissolving views of the hereditary principle of the House of Lords. But the question before the House is not whether there ought to be a Second Chamber—that is a distinct question well worthy of consideration in a separate debate. The hon. Member wants to qualify the hereditary principle by representation. I cannot imagine where the hon. Member will get his representatives of labour. These representatives would not be popular with the class from which they have been selected. Now I object strongly to the principle of hereditary legislature, and I say that no reform short of the abolition of this kind of class distinction will satisfy those of us who spring from the people. The

hon. Member in the early part of his speech showed that fear and trembling which is exhibited on that side of the House when we talk of popular legislation. He said—"I do not believe in the confiscatory proposals of the hon. Member for Northampton." We have so often heard the word confiscation used in this House. We are told we are going in for confiscation whenever we talk of land reform, but it is decidedly original to hear the hon. Member talk about confiscation in case the Legislature in its wisdom sees fit to abolish the principle of hereditary legislators. He pointed out that he is afraid of the wave of democracy. I believe he is quite right in being afraid of it, and I think the programme advanced by some of us on this side of the House constitutes the reason why many of our weak-kneed brethren have fallen away from us. It is the wave of democracy with regard to land reform, and with regard to the policy of privilege and of class distinction, and not the simple question of giving Ireland control of its own affairs, that is responsible for the Government being supported on this side of the House by persons who have hitherto followed our own honoured Leader into the Lobby. It is because we believe that the wave of democracy should have its legitimate sway in the Councils of the nation, and because we hold that its voice should be heard in the Legislative Chambers of this country, that we object to an institution which blocks up the path of progress. The hereditary principle must go. It is the outcome of an old feudal system which has disappeared. What has been the single argument urged by the hon. Member opposite in favour of that principle? He said, you have had statesmen and warriors, you have had men of great ability in that House, thanks to the hereditary principle. I traverse the whole argument. I say that you have gained nothing by the hereditary principle; you have not secured to the country any ability which would not otherwise have been placed at its service. Whatever ability there is in the country will find its way into the House, if it so desires, and you will have the benefit of it, irrespective of the hereditary principle. But under the present system you get into public life a number of persons who are neither beneficial to themselves nor to the country at large. How will the hon. Gentleman weed them out? He has no policy which will do that, yet his Amendment puts you upon an inclined plane, and you will necessarily be landed at the bottom. Again, the hon. Member has argued that it enables poor young men of ability to find their way into public life. But have "poor young men of ability" failed to find their way into this House? I venture to say that there are more poor young men of ability inside the walls of this House than ever before, and if you want to introduce these men into public life, it is not to be done by maintaining the privileges of the wealthy classes; you can do it better by putting the Returning Officer's charges on the Consolidated Fund. The hon. Gentleman may even go a step further in that direction and vote for the payment of Members, so that the brains of "poor young men of ability" may be given to this country, and a man who desires to enter public life may not have to sacrifice his means of earning a livelihood. Leading men in the present Cabinet have passed through this House with great advantage to themselves. Now, the hon. Member told us that we must have a Second Chamber on purpose to stop the Democratic wave. I have tried so far as is in my power to read all that has been written on the subject of a Second Chamber, and among the authorities I have read is John Stuart Mill, who, in his chapter on Second Chambers in his work on Representative Government, distinctly points out that the House of Lords entirely fails to meet the requirements indicated by the hon. Member opposite. But Stuart Mill went further, and said the House of Lords would have to be re-constituted and the hereditary principle left out. The time is rapidly approaching when we must come to conclusions with the hereditary legislators. The House of Lords is an insult to the manhood of the nation. If we are to have a Second Chamber, the hereditary principle must be altogether left out of it. Is there any simple reason why a man because he is the son of his father should have the right to be a born legislator, and legislate for us and our children without

our having a word to say as to his election? Hon. Members opposite may think that I am expressing strong sentiments, but these are the opinions of many of us. You may tinker and peddle with the question, but the principle will have to go; the manhood of the nation will not tolerate legislation by men simply by reason of their birth. The people have not forgotten the history of the House of Lords. They neither forget nor forgive. They remember '32, and '66, and '84; and what are we threatened with now? The Prime Minister declares that if a Liberal Parliament is returned at the next General Election and decides on a question of public policy in accordance with the views of those who elect it, if it passes a certain great measure, the House of Lords will throw it out. Let them try it. It will be so much the worse for the House of Lords. The country will not tolerate the throwing out of a great popular measure. If the House of Lords could not succeed in stopping the Reform Bill of 1832, there is little doubt that they will be unsuccessful in stopping a Home Rule measure a year or two hence. It is because we have had such bitter experience in the past of the House of Lords that we are determined to agitate and get rid of it as soon as we can. We do not only think of the measures which it has attempted to reject, we do not think merely of the measures which it desires to stop passing into law, but we have also in our recollection measures which it has mutilated. The Upper Chamber is not in touch and in sympathy with the people, and that is the reason of the slow progress we have made in the past. The hon. Member for Southport told us the House of Lords enabled a class to be represented who otherwise would have no representation. But my experience teaches me that those who have been represented in the House of Lords have always been over-represented in the House of Commons. We have no objection to any class having its fair share of representation in this House, but I say that we who are in the lowest scale of society are handicapped by the privileges of those who have wealth and social distinction. I assert that there is no class represented in the House of Lords who has not already a very large amount of representation in this House. For instance, that is the case with the landed classes. I am glad to see that their power is breaking up. I can understand they are not so happy as when they had the whole Chamber to themselves. Now, the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton distinctly challenges the hereditary principle of legislation. If we are to have a Second Chamber it must be representative, and we shall be prepared to discuss that on another occasion. We now ask, are you prepared to give up the hereditary principle? This is a question we intend to fight to the death, and we are resolved that the hereditary principle shall no longer exist in this country.

*Mr. E. W. BECKETT (York, N.R., Whitby): I regret that I have to differ from both the Motion and the Amendment. The path of true Conservatism lies in a different direction. I do not think that political attacks on the House of Lords serve any useful purpose whatsoever; they only stir up ill-will against an integral part of the Constitution which, by common consent, does its work well. The contrast between the object of the Motion and the means by which it is to be accomplished is almost startling. For an irresponsible Member of a divided —I might almost say a discredited— Opposition to rise below the Gangway and attempt in the brief hours of a summer's night to abolish an Assembly which has now existed for 700 years, is an enterprise that hovers so near the borderland that divides the sublime from the ridiculous that we should be in doubt to which domain it belonged were it not for the character and speech of him by whom it is undertaken. If hon. Gentlemen opposite have made up their minds to abolish the House of Lords, I think they might have conducted its obsequies with more pomp and circumstance, and with a keener eye to dramatice effect, such as they know so well how to produce elsewhere. I myself do not think the House of Lords will be abolished just yet, and I cannot help thinking that there is an air of unreality about this Motion. The Amendment rejects the principle that underlies the Motion, but in the substance of the Amendment and in the speech of my hon. Friend I certainly find an objection to

the hereditary principle. That principle has been accepted and adopted by mankind in all ages and all countries. No one who reads history can doubt that the country which is governed by an hereditary Monarchy is better governed than by an elective Monarchy, and the more despotic the powers of the Monarch the greater the advantages of the hereditary system appear to be. Now, if the experience of mankind has taught us that it is better and safer for a country to be governed by a man possessing a power that has been handed down to him from his father than by a man elected by the free choice of the people, there must be something good in the hereditary principle. What is it, then, that is good in that principle? It is this, that the application of the mind to a particular pursuit, if carried on through several generations undoubtedly generates an aptitude for that pursuit. I remember asking a well-known Master of Foxhounds how it was he always managed to have such good foxhounds and such good whips, and his reply was, "Because I always have those who are bred to hunting." I have also heard of a highly successful manufacturer in the North who attributed his success in business to the fact that he selected his spinners and weavers from those who were bred to the trade. The House of Lords is composed of men taken arbitrarily from about 500 families, while the House of Commons is selected from about 7,000,000 families. Yet, deducting from the House of Lords those who sit there by virtue of their own talents, and deducting from the House of Commons those Members who belong to families represented in the House of Lords, he would be a bold man who would confidently assert that in all the qualities that make an ideal British legislator the Members of the House of Lords were inferior to the Members of the House of Commons. With regard to the action of the House of Lords in the past, reference has been made to its having thrown out the Compensation for Disturbance Bill; and this, it is said, led to a great increase of outrages in Ireland. Such outrages were, in my opinion, far more due to the action of the Liberal Party in refusing to continue the Peace Preservation Act. Hon. Members talk as if the Members of the House of Lords belonged not to a different House, but to a different century. But the Members of the House of Lords are as much open to the influence of modern ideas as we are, and are as fully capable of holding wise and statesmanlike views. The hon. Member opposite referred to the ancestry of two noble Lords, but I cannot see how the extraordinary fact of a man having ancestors should render him incapable of sympathizing with the feelings of the day. The hon. Gentleman remarked that Burke had said the aristocracy was the cheap defence of nations. He, however, misquoted Burke. The true quotation is that "Chivalry is the cheap defence of nations," and I am glad the hon. Member unwittingly paid the House of Lords the compliment of confounding aristocracy with chivalry. It seems to me that the composition of the Second Chamber should not rest on the same basis as that of the First Chamber. It should be, if possible, the expression of a different principle. The real use of a Second Chamber is that it represents, or should represent, the opinions of those who are not acted upon by the same influences as act upon the First Chamber. There are only two successful Second Chambers in the world. One is the House of Lords and the other is the American Senate. Each of them represents a principle. In the case of the House of Lords it is the hereditary principle, and in the case of the American Senate the Federal principle that is represented. I think myself that the Federal principle is the better of the two, and that if we could introduce it into the composition of the House of Lords, it would be an advantage, but that we cannot have until the Federation of the Empire is an accomplished fact. In the meantime, let us go on as we are. In Australia there is hardly room as yet for a Second Chamber; society is too small and too undeveloped. In France we see that the Senate is as yet a new and untried body, and neither years nor services have crowned it with honour in the mind of the country. Our Second Chamber is not only a guarantee against rash and impulsive legislation; it is also the protector of religion and law and order, and all

the things which help to keep the State train upon the rails. Above all, it has always been a bulwark against one man power. A popular Leader of the present day, who has possessed himself of the hearts of the people, obtain almost incredible power. It is an unfortunate thing for a country when one man obtains a large measure of irresponsible power, and it is undoubtedly the fact that a Second Chamber, call it what you will, has always set itself against the undue exercise of power by one man, whether he be king, soldier, or demagogue. I consider that both the hereditary principle and a Second Chamber are good things, and that, under the circumstances, our Second Chamber is about the best thing we can have. The hon. Member for Southport (Mr. G. Curzon) spoke in favour of a very strong and considerable modification of the hereditary principle, and suggested what would amount to a total transformation of the House of Lords. Before the House of Commons consents to such a suggestion as that, I think will be as well to settle the question of what work you are going to give the House of Lords to do. Is the House of Commons to part with its prerogatives—for, if not, the House of Lords may just as well remain as it is, for unquestionably it does the work it is expected to do remarkably well. As to the selection of Peers, we have not been told how they are to be selected, and I cannot conceive on what principle you can hit on an expedient that will enable those in power to select the proper men. Reference has been made to bad conduct on the part of some Peers. It would be just as well, I agree, if you could exclude direputable characters from all legislative bodies, but somehow or other they will creep in and you cannot keep them out. But I cannot agree with my hon. Friend (Mr. G. Curzon) in thinking that it would be possible to devise machinery by which to expel the black, or even the "piebald" sheep from the House of Lords. The remedies proposed in the shape of the creation of Life Peers and the extension of the system of representative Peerages are of a homœopathic character, and, as far as they are of a reasonable character, the House of Lords has shown itself ready to adopt them. Further, I cannot help thinking that it would be an indecorous and improper act on our part to attempt to force the hand of the House of Lords. In trying to compel the House of Lords to do what it has declared itself ready to do, we are going out of our way to inflict an indignity on the House, and are likely to stir up a resentment which certainly will not smooth the way for the reforms proposed by my hon. Friend. Therefore, Sir, I am unable to see that it is consistent with Conservative principles to support either the Motion or the Amendment.

Mr. E. W. Beckett.

*EARL COMPTON (York, W.R., Barnsley): As I occupy rather a unique position on this side of the House, I think perhaps hon. Members may be ready to listen to my views upon the question before it. It seems very odd to me, Sir, that on the two occasions—1886 and 1889—that I have had the honour of being in this House when this question has been brought forward an Amendment has been moved, or intended to be moved, by the eldest son of a Peer. On the last occasion it was moved by the present Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Brodrick) in a very eloquent speech, and to-night it has been brought forward by another eldest son, and, as far as I am aware, both of them are distinctly in favour of the reform of the House of Lords. I can quite understand that the last speaker is not quite in agreement with the eldest sons of Peers. He does not understand the wail that proceeded from the hon. Member for the Southport Division (Mr. Curzon) last year, that the eldest son of an hereditary Peer was bound on the death of his father to take the title whether willing or not, and that with the title came the necessity of moving from this House into the House of Lords. It is never an agreeable thing to speak on any subject in which one has to take into consideration the death of the father. In the course of time—I hope at a dis-

tant time—most of those in this House who are eldest sons will be, against their will, removed from this Assembly in order to take part in the deliberations of another Assembly, to which they do not wish to go. There have been several schemes of reform before the country, and those schemes have been also introduced into the Upper House not only by a Liberal Peer, but also by the present Prime Minister. There seems to be, therefore, on all sides a general feeling, if we perhaps except a small minority of hon. Members opposite, that some reform is required, and there is, I think, a general feeling of dissatisfaction with the present constitution of the House of Lords. The Liberal Party has decided objections to the constitution of the House of Lords. They object to it, I suppose, firstly because of the permanent Tory majority in that House. Whenever we say that, we are told that the Liberal Leaders, like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), have created many Peerages in their time, and therefore it is not for us to say anything about the permanent Tory majority. But, unfortunately, there appears to be a certain atmosphere in the other House, and I do not think it is too much to say that the way in which certain noblemen who have striven hard for the honour of a Peerage for a long time have turned their coats as soon as they secured it, has been almost indecent. One of the great objections, in my opinion, to the present constitution of the House of Lords is that wealth is absolutely necessary to any man who accepts a Peerage unless he happens to have no family. In all other cases wealth is the principal reason for the elevation of men to the House of Lords. We also object to the non-representative character of the House of Lords and to its hereditary principle. What are more to the point are the objections of Conservatives to the House of Lords. Their first objection, naturally, is to the black sheep, and I perfectly agree that it is impossible to devise a scheme for separating the black sheep from the white in any assembly. To my mind the proposal of the Prime Minister on that point was absurd in the extreme. Most important of all are the objections of the country to the House of Lords. As far as I can judge, the Members of the House of Lords are utterly out of sympathy with the people of this country, and, I believe, it is the object of a large number of Conservative Members to remove that objection by bringing the House of Lords more into sympathy with the masses of the people. The people are being taught not to be content with the constitution of the House of Lords. Almost every biography one reads of statesmen who have been in the House of Lords speaks in terms of blame of that House. A nobleman who could not be considered a Party man who wielded, and still wields, a great influence over his fellow men (Lord Shaftesbury) spoke of the House of Lords on one occasion as having strong feelings of personal and political interest, but little generosity and no sentiment. On another occasion he said of it, "There is a coldness, an insensibility, which are perfectly benumbing." In 1882, after the debate on the Registration Bill, he wrote, "I consider the extinction of the House of Lords, in fact if not in terms, a foregone conclusion now." It was living he said on sufferance, and it was the sufferance "of the boa-constrictor in the Zoological Gardens, who has his rabbit in the cage, and is not quite ready for it." The people are reading the views of this good man, and they are being permeated with the idea that the House of Lords is out of sympathy with them, and if hon. Members are anxious to preserve the House of Lords, it is their duty to reform it in such a way as to bring it into direct sympathy with the people, instead of prolonging and intensifying the antipathy which at present exists. I believe it would be a mistake not to have two Chambers. We have the alternative of a representative Second Chamber, or the extinction of this Chamber, and of seeing only one

Chamber in England. Unless something is done, and done quickly, it will be too late to reform the House of Lords. When the time comes, the extreme Conservative Party will raise the old cry, "The Constitution in danger.". The people of England have heard that cry too often—they will pay no attention to it. Then we shall have the Tory democrat coming forward with certain reforms, but they will be too late unless something is done quickly. If the reforms do not come before the real attack is made, we shall find the real democratic boa-constrictor swallowing his rabbit, and the House of Lords would not be mended but ended. As I am not in favour of it being ended, as I am anxious for some great reform in its constitution, I give the Resolution my support to-night. I believe the only practical reform is not by slight tinkering modifications, but by sweeping away altogether the hereditary principle.

*VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen): I have the great misfortune not to agree with much that has been said on both sides in the course of this debate, and perhaps the House will allow me to say a word or two—they shall be few—in definition of the position I occupy. I am not opposed in any way to a reform of the House of Lords, reform, that is to say, that would make that House better than it is. But I observe that what is considered reform has a very different signification on that side of the House and on this. A reform of the House of Lords that would make that House stronger, make it even more independent than it is, more capable of representing the permanent convictions of the people of this country, I would heartily welcome; but the reform the hon. Member for Northampton and his friends desire is not a reform which would make the House of Lords stronger, not a reform that would make it more able to resist the transient wishes of a Radical Party in this House, but a reform that would make the House of Lords utterly subservient to one night's debate in the House of Commons, and make it utterly useless and unworthy of the name of a Second Chamber. I know that my noble Friend who has just set down did not in his speech hold that view, but he will not persuade us that his friends are really in favour of strengthening the House of Lords. As I said, I find myself in disagreement with what has been said on either side. In the first place, I do not admit what was said by my noble Friend (Earl Compton), that to vote against the Resolution will necessarily be to support the Amendment of which my hon. Friend on this side (Mr. Curzon) has given notice. I admit—most willingly admit—that the Amendment of my hon. Friend differs from the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton as light differs from darkness, but I should be sorry to vote for it. The vote I intend to give will be simply a vote against the Resolution of the hon. Member for Northampton. That proposition as put from the Chair will be that the hereditary principle in the House of Lords should be abolished; and as I humbly think it ought to be maintained, I shall vote accordingly. Nor can I agree with my noble Friend in objecting to the House of Lords because that House contains a Tory majority—that might be expected, perhaps. But as a matter of fact, as my hon. Friend the Member for Southport (Mr. Curzon) pointed out, all Second Chambers, more or less, whatever their constitution may be, do contain a Tory majority. You may not call it Tory, but a majority more moderate than the majority of the First or Representative Chamber. What charge can be brought against the House of Lords for containing a Tory majority? I understand the *gravamen* of the charge is that in maintaining a Tory majority they are not in sympathy with the people of this country. But surely the people of this country have sent into this House, if not a Tory, a Unionist majority. In doing this they amply justify the House

of Lords in maintaining their majority. The hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Rowlands) says that if we depart from the hereditary principle we shall be on an inclined plane, which must of necessity lead to the most Ultra-Radical reform. Now, I do not understand the force of that objection; I do not believe it, but if it were true at all, it would also follow that any body composed of Members returned on two different principles is doomed to immediate change. Now I find the French Senate has contained for a long time Members returned on different principles — it may be altered at this moment, for changes in France are frequent and rapid — but for a long time the French Senate continued with life Members and elected Members. But I need not go so far a-field for an illustration. I can go to the House of Lords itself, which has existed for I do not know how many centuries with Members, some hereditary and some representative, and there has been no difficulty found in the work of the House of Lords through the system by which Bishops and Scotch and Irish Peers become Members. Therefore I do not believe that the representative principle would at once doom the House of Lords to complete alteration. But when I turn from the speeches on the other side, to that delivered by my hon. Friend the Member for Southport, I must honestly say, that I cannot follow him in all he says. If I thought that the reform of the House of Lords advocated by my hon. Friend in his eloquent speech to-night and by still more eloquent articles written last year, was a reform calculated to make the House of Lords stronger, if it were a feasible reform, I should be among my hon. Friend's most ardent supporters, but I do not think his proposal a practical one. Life Peerages are very good things in their way, and a certain number of life Peerages already exist in the House of Lords. Under certain defined circumstances it is a system that will always be useful, but I do not think that a large system of life Peerages side by side with the hereditary system would work well. You cannot say to a man, "You are not good enough for a hereditary Peerage, you must be put among the life Peers." However Radical a man might be he would not take it. If the hon. Member for Finsbury were offered a life Peerage to-morrow he would not take it; he would refuse it, because it was not hereditary. If I turn to the principle of representation, I am met with this difficulty at the outset, that the two systems that do exist are rejected by my hon. Friend. He would not have the representation of the Scotch and Irish Peers, but what other form of representation is there? The elective form of representation would, it appears to me, destroy the main feature of the House of Lords—a feature in which, in my humble judgment, in some respects it excels the House in which I have the honour now to speak. The elective principle implies that a man has to give pledges and promises on subjects he does not understand. [*Laughter.*] Well, if hon. Gentlemen above and below the Gangway opposite think they thoroughly understand the pledges they gave in support of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian at the last election, I congratulate them. I am glad to say that for my own part I did my very best, and I may venture to say that to a large extent I succeeded in persuading those who did me the honour to send me to Parliament to elect me with as few pledges as possible. Not only do men give pledges they do not understand, but when in Parliament even without pledges they are obliged to give votes against their convictions for fear of not being returned at the next election. [*Laughter.*] It is all very well for the hypocrisy of hon. Members—no, I withdraw that word, it is not Parliamentary—but hon. Members are well aware that it is a common-place theory and a conventional idea that all Members vote on every proposal according to their belief, but nobody really believes that to be the case. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members may jeer, but the only difference between us is, that I have the honesty and courage to declare it, and they have not. Therefore, I think that whatever may be said of the elective principle—and of course, though I venture to offer these few criticisms, I do not mean to say that it is not a valuable system upon which Government is based, we have it efficiently embodied in the constitution of this House—and it would be

a great mistake to introduce it into the House of Lords, that House whose useful function it is by its action to mitigate the evils to which I have called attention, and which necessarily attend the principle of election to this House. Of course, I may be brought up with the obvious remark, "If you are in favour of the reform of the House of Lords, what reform do you favour?" Well, I am in favour of a reform of the House of Lords if it can be found; but the reform I can favour must be precisely in the sense of the reform I adverted to in the beginning of my remarks, a reform which would make the House of Lords stronger and more independent. I do not share the view that the matter is so important that it is necessary to come to a decision at the moment, as some hon. Members seem to think. It seems to me there are many things that might be said in favour of the present House of Lords. I have often heard it said the House of Lords consists of a large number of Members who very seldom attend, but who come up from the country on occasions of importance and vote without having heard the preceding debate, or having paid little regard to the speeches made in debate. I do not know they are very wrong. To begin with, judging from my very short experience in this House, I am not sure that very much can be gained by listening to debate. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members may object to that, but let me say that my imaginary Peer—no, he is not imaginary, he is very real—my typical Peer, who comes up from the country and does not live in London and does not take an active part in party politics, is not therefore incompetent to form a judgment on a great question presented for decision. He is probably a leading personage in his county; probably chairman of Quarter Sessions; probably he is on the County Council, and takes an active share in the local life, the feelings and opinions in his county; he is intimately acquainted with many questions upon which Parliament is called upon to legislate, and is probably as good a judge on any political question as the Gentleman who regularly divides his time between Parliament and Pall Mall, who when not a legislator is a member of the fashionable society of London. He is as capable of judgment as hon. Gentlemen who occupy their industry in commercial pursuits, and who, though I do not mean to underrate the importance of their functions, are only able to devote the fag ends of their time to legislation, who come from counting-house, or law courts, to utilise the few stray ends of their busy lives in legislating for the needs of this great country. If the House of Lords has its faults—and I admit it has very grave faults, for you cannot create any institution that shall be perfect—I do not think the House of Lords suffers in comparison with the Second Chambers of foreign nations. We cannot all treat the subject with that ability and constitutional knowledge the hon. Member for Aberdeen possesses, and have to fall back upon our comparatively smaller ability, and compare the House of Lords with what we have before us, and I think a comparison with the House of Commons is not wholly unfavourable to the House of Lords. Is it not matter for the deepest regret that the House of Commons is every day losing credit in the country? The country may be wrong. I am very far from using that flattering language to my countrymen that some hon Members affect, declaring the people are always right, but I say, among the people the House of Commons has less dignity, less influence than of yore. There is more talk and less work; very little eloquence, and less legislation. Now, when I am asked, "Why this difference? why it is that the House of Lords continues to maintain that position which it does?" I admit it is not so high as I could wish. I admit it has fallen below the position I would wish it to occupy, but, at any rate, it is not falling back in the least degree. While we observe the House of Commons constituted upon the purely elective principle is losing credit every day, I cannot find an explanation that should lead us to condemn the House of Lords in any way. We should rather be content that though imperfect, it is as good as any Second Chamber with which we can compare it, that we should be content with its faults and glad that it is no worse than it is. When I say worse than it is I have in mind

something worse that it would not be respectful to the House for me more to specify. I shall not attempt to investigate why the House of Lords does maintain its position. I am sufficiently old-fashioned to believe to a certain extent in the hereditary principle; it is the principle upon which all property is held, and I cannot accept what is urged by Radical orators that every Member of the House of Lords is the son of his father, as a convincing proof of the iniquity of the House of Lords. That men are the sons of their fathers is an elementary fact upon which the whole of modern society is constituted. The House has been exceedingly kind to me, and I will not trespass on their indulgence. In all seriousness I would urge that the House of Lords, at any rate, with all its imperfections, inseparable from any human institution, does its work with business-like capacity, and debates great questions with much ability and eloquence, and we should be impractical to quarrel with the House of Lords merely because it presents one political complexion rather than another. It has been the growth and work of many generations, and together with the House in which I have the honour to speak has contributed largely to the success of this wonderful Constitution under which we live. We should be foolish, indeed, if we, in conformity with the views of the hon. Member for Northampton, resolved that the principle upon which it has worked, and, as I think successfully, is thoroughly wrong and ought to be radically changed.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I think we have some reason to complain that the Government have allowed the debate to proceed so far without giving us some indication of their views, and I say so the more because it will be within the distinct recollection of the House that upon a similar occasion last year the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury did not deny the necessity for reform, but said that reform ought to come from the House of Lords itself. We have waited until now for the fulfilment of the hope, but no reform has come from the House of Lords. The proposal which was embodied in the Bill brought in by the Prime Minister was, as was ludicrously obvious, a mere pretence and a sham that rather aggravated existing evils, and we are left more in doubt as to the view the Government take of the situation. I do not know whether we are to suppose that the speech of the noble Lord who has just sat down is to be taken as expressing the view of the Government, but if it is I am able to congratulate the Government, more than I have been in a position to do lately, on the candour with which their view has been stated, because the noble Lord has given us his candid opinion, not only of the House of Lords, but also of the House of Commons. He tells us that this House does little work and no legislation, and he tells us to what the degradation of the House is to be ascribed. I listened with some interest to the views of the noble Lord, thinking that probably they represent the views of some other persons. I listened in vain to hear whether or not he thinks any reform of the House of Lords is necessary. For myself, I think that any reform of the House of Lords ought to be such as will make it stronger and more efficient. I conceive that the House of Lords as at present organized is perfectly useless and hopelessly weak. Can any case be pointed out in which, during the last 60 years, the House of Lords has rendered any substantial service to legislation, either by defeating a bad proposal or by putting a good proposal into a better shape? The two points to be considered are—first, do we want a Second Chamber? and, next, what ought that Second Chamber to be? I think that the experience of every free country in the world is practically conclusive as to the necessity of a Second Chamber. I know of no great free country that has prospered under one Chamber alone, and I

do not know of any that has lived without a Second Chamber, except France in certain revolutionary periods. The existence of a Second Chamber is confirmed by reason itself, because tyranny may proceed from a body as well as from one man; and it is a protection that the ruling body should be divided into two branches, the emulation, and even rivalry of which may prevent dangerous measures from being hurried through. That opinion is gaining ground in this country. During the agitation in the autumn of 1885, there were probably many who thought we ought only to have one Chamber, and that the House of Lords should be extinguished; but I believe that that feeling has declined, and has declined even in the stern breast of the hon. Member for Northampton; and I believe that, generally, there is a strong feeling in the country that the House of Commons ought not to have the sole charge of the interests of the nation. This House, now, is different from what it was in 1884. It is not only a more democratic body and more responsive to gusts of outside feeling, but is much changed in its inner working and construction. The introduction of the Closure, the way the Closure is worked, and, above all, its application to the passing of the Crimes Act in 1887, and the Commission Bill of last year, rendering the recurrence of similar expedients more likely, makes this House a totally different body from what it was before, and renders it necessary to provide safeguards against the danger of precipitate action which did not exist in 1884. I come now to the next point—what the Second Chamber ought to be. I hold that it ought to be a reality, and that there is no use in continuing it unless we give it some working functions in the Constitution. It should be a Chamber capable of making itself felt in the country, whose debates will be listened to, and whose decisions will carry weight. I am far from saying that it ought to be co-ordinate with the House of Commons; but there are valuable functions which it might discharge; whether, as Mr. Bright suggested, by interposing a delay, or by having the general vote of both Houses together, as Lord Rosebery suggested, or by some other mode, it is not for me now to inquire. But I think it is not beyond the wit of man to discover the functions that could be usefully assigned to a Second Chamber in regard to legislation which, whilst not rendering it co-ordinate with this House, would enable it to act as a check upon this House. My view is that a Second Chamber to be useful must be strong, and to be strong should be representative. The reason why the House of Lords is an object of popular distrust instead of enjoying the confidence of the country is because it does not represent the people. We think that any hereditary House must be a weak one, and we would rather have no Second Chamber at all than a weak one. We say that to have a stick which breaks in your hand when you lean on it is worse than having no stick at all, and if I had to select between the present House of Lords and one Chamber, I should prefer one Chamber. I venture to believe that the sooner the House of Lords and the Government realize the facts the better. The present state of things is just that which the revolutionist would desire. The House of Lords is not reforming itself; things are going from bad to worse; every year its hold over the country becomes less and less; and I believe that the tree has become so rotten that it would fall at the first blast of popular displeasure. As soon as a Radical House of Commons comes we shall find it impossible to go on with the House of Lords occupying its present position. Then either the House of Lords will resist, in which case it will fall, or it will yield where it is known to dislike and disapprove, in which case it will fall still further in the estimation of the country. It is because I should profoundly regret such results that I venture to appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite and to the Government to consider the time and period at which we have arrived, and not to persist in forcing the abolition of the House of Lords on a Radical House of Commons—which we shall assuredly have one of these days, whether or not it comes at the next General Election, as a great many people seem to think it will. This is really not so much a Party question as some hon.

Members opposite seem to regard it; it is one affecting the whole of the country, and the constitution with which we have grown great. There is a much higher and better function for a Second Chamber than merely interposing captious and vexatious delays in the way of useful reforms, delays which drive people to make larger demands. I do not regard a Second Chamber as merely designed to check the wave of democracy. That wave has come, and is flowing over us. We are as completely democratic as any country in the world. What is exceptional in our case is that we have not surrounded the Constitution with those safeguards which other democratic countries have adopted. What we want the Government to realize is that they should help us—that they should endeavour to bring forward a practical scheme to change the character of the House of Lords so as to give it more strength and moral force. I am afraid that what I say falls on those who are not willing to listen; but we on this side feel compelled to put these considerations before you. It is not in the interest of a political Party that change is desired; it is desired to give stability to the whole structure of Government, to save the country from sudden impulses, and in the happy words of Mr. Lowell, to let the Government carry out the people's will and not the people's whim. On these grounds I feel bound to support the hon. Member for Northampton. It is only by getting rid of the hereditary principle and basing a Second Chamber upon election that you can maintain a Second Chamber. This is a comparatively quiet time. There is a Government in power which has great influence in the House of Lords, and nothing would more contribute to the peace of the country and the stability of the Government than the reconstruction of the House of Lords on a truly popular and representative basis.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, East): I would not occupy the quarter of an hour which will elapse before the compulsory termination of our proceedings to-night, but I think it necessary, perhaps, that some Member should rise from this Bench in order to express our congratulations at the extremely Tory speech to which we have just listened from the hon. Member for Aberdeen. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was in the House when the hon. Member for East Finsbury, who represented himself as the exponent of coming ideas, made his speech. It was a glorification of the wave of democracy which has filled so large a space in the debate, and which the hon. Member for Aberdeen seems to be more afraid of than I am myself. The whole speech of the hon. Member was full of dark forebodings as to the results of gusts of popular passion acting upon a representative Chamber. He admittted that he and his friends had learnt great lessons since 1884, and apparently they have not been able to withstand the conclusion that they flow from the advent of the Conservative Government to power. They object to the proceedings of that Conservative Government, and would like a Second Chamber to resist its proceedings, and they have straightway become convinced that a Second Chamber is absolutely necessary. That necessity is not agreed to by the other exponent of democracy, the hon. Member for East Finsbury, though it is a cardinal principle and part of the faith of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. It is also a part of our faith. We think it is absolutely necessary for the smooth working of our institutions that there should be a Second Chamber to protect us from the gusts of passion that the hon. Gentleman has so feelingly alluded to, and it is because we think that the House of Lords as it is now constituted, does fulfil the purpose in an adequate manner, and because no better method of attaining that purpose has been suggested, that we shall oppose the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton. Does the hon. Gentleman really think that the House of Lords is so unpopular

in the country as he represents? At the present moment that Assembly is more solidly founded on the popular feeling of the country than any Second Chamber in existence, except the American Second Chamber. To abolish the Second Chamber that we have, founded as it is in the affections of the people, at the instigation of speculative politicians, who think that it is within the compass of human understanding to construct another Chamber which would more efficiently perform its functions, seems to me absolute madness. I am in truth a better democrat than the hon. Gentleman, for I should regret to see a Second Chamber set up which would have it in its power to enter into conflicts carried over long years with this House. When hon. Members say the House of Lords is an antiquated Assembly, I would point out that that Assembly, like many other institutions in this country, has, without making any definite or formal change in its constitution, gradually assimilated itself to the wants and ideas of the country. At one time the House of Lords was more powerful than the House of Commons; at another it was co-equal with this House; but by the gradual process which has so usefully modified many of our institutions, the House of Lords has also undergone a change, and now no man will for a moment pretend that it is co-equal in power with the House of Commons, and I for one do not desire that it should be. If the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down thinks that his study of foreign constitutions has enabled him to devise and construct a new Second Chamber which will have none of the vices, if vices there be, of the present House of Lords, and which would be a counterfoil to a majority in the House of Commons, I congratulate him on his courage, though not on his wisdom. This country possesses an Assembly embodied in the historic traditions of the country, and I do not believe that the English people, who have received this inestimable treasure from their ancestors, would be guilty of the mid-summer madness of destroying that Assembly and be content to rely on a Second Chamber, of which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen was not able to give us the roughest sketch. Her Majesty's Government will vote against this Amendment, not merely on its merits because they object to the abolition of the hereditary principle, but also because the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton and those who have supported him have made no material contribution to the solution of the difficulty which will have to be met when the existing Second Chamber is abolished.

Mr. A. J. Balfour

*Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to enter the strongest possible protest against some of the doctrines which have been promulgated from the Liberal side of the House. I would recommend the hon. Member who has promulgated them to stand on a platform in Aberdeen and repeat them and see what the verdict of his constituents would be. I wish to state my conviction that there is only one practical way of reforming the House of Lords, and that is to abolish a Second Chamber altogether. The praise that has been lavished by both sides of the House on the American Senate I have heard with some alarm. It is, no doubt, due to the fact that hon. Gentlemen realise that in a capitalist Republic people have no more freedom than under a monarchy.

The House divided; Ayes 201; Noes 160.—(Div. List, No. 118.)

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

SUPPLY—Committee upon Monday next.

It being after one of the clock Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at ten minutes after One o'clock, till Monday next.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 5.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MAY 28.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 20th May, 1889.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL. (No 47.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE EARL OF MEATH: My Lords, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, I desire to emphasize the fact that I do not ask your Lordships to endorse any new principle. I only ask you to extend a principle which has been already sanctioned by Parliament—namely, that women are fit to carry on administrative work. Parliament has already given its sanction to the election of women to School Boards and Boards of Poor Law Guardians; and I think it will be allowed that, in many instances, very valuable and excellent work has been performed by the ladies who have served on those bodies. It may be said that if women are permitted to become County Councillors the next thing will be that they will have to be admitted to Parliament. I at once say that, for myself, I should very much deprecate any such step as that. But I do not think there can be any argument founded on that suggestion in reference to the fitness of women to deal with questions of *haute politique* or questions of political importance. The work of County Councils is very much like that of School Boards and Boards of Guardians. Their work is administrative in the strictest sense of the term. The London County Council, of which I have the honour to be a Member, has to look after 23 baby-farms, and women whose administrative powers are so great would be best qualified to look after those farms. In addition to this, we have to look after boarded-out children and industrial schools, in which at least half of the children are girls. Then, in addition to that, we have to look after 10,000 lunatics, half of whom also belong to the weaker sex; and in all these and cognate matters I maintain that women are just as good administrators, if not better, than men. Women have shown their powers in carrying out details of this kind in domestic and social work, and I do not think, my Lords, that, having already admitted them to School Boards and Boards of Guardians, there would be any revolutionary step in asking that they should be admitted to sit in County Councils. In the London County Council we have had some experience of how the three ladies who have been elected to that body have worked; and the Council has expressed an opinion a few days ago in favour of the admission of women to the County Councils by the vote of a majority of 48 to 22, or more than 2 to 1. Most of the work that those ladies are asked to perform is of the kind I have mentioned. I am myself Chairman of one of the Committees, and I must say that the ladies have always given me the very greatest assistance in carrying out our work. It is a subject of deep regret to me that, in consequence of the recent decision in the Courts of Law, the lady members of the London County Council will have to retire, and that that body will be deprived of their valuable assistance. I hope, therefore, your Lordships will permit this Bill to be read a second time, and I think if we consider what

has been the composition of Municipal Boards in this country in the past, we must acknowledge there is much room for improvement. Certainly, I believe that women would be less open to the temptation of jobbery than are some of the men who often get elected upon these Boards. My Lords, I would ask you to remember what women have done for the social needs of this country and what they are doing in that direction. There are some sad festering social sores in the body politic; and amongst those who are earnestly labouring to cure or mitigate those evils a large majority are women. Lord Shaftesbury once said, after returning from one of his almost daily journeys to the East of London, that he was astonished at the patience of the people, and that if it were not for Christian influences he believed the West would be sacked by the East. My Lords, I believe that what Lord Shaftesbury said in that respect was true; but I venture to assert that it is the women of England who stand between the Government and revolution. I have some knowledge, my Lords, upon the subject of which I am speaking, and I know that, although an immense amount of good work is being done by the missionary efforts of the Church and other religious bodies in our large towns, those who are engaged in that work would be the first to acknowledge that their efforts would be to a great extent ineffectual but for the aid of the thousands of devoted women who co-operate with them. It may be said, my Lords, that women have been tried in public work, and that, occasionally, they have failed; but I do not think that argument can be really urged against the admission of women to the County Councils or any other public body. I would ask, my Lords, whether it can be asserted that the municipal and other administrative bodies in this country, which are composed exclusively of men, are of such exceeding excellence that there is a danger of their being impaired or deteriorated by the devotion of women? And if some women have shown too much enthusiasm and zeal in what they have set to work about, and have done it in an injudicious manner, it has been, perhaps, in no small degree owing to the fact that they have been denied, until recent years, an opportunity of acquiring practical experience in connection with such bodies. I believe, my Lords, there is a body of men not very far from this House who might take a lesson, to some extent, from those women. Women should not be encouraged to waste their efforts, but to guide them in a useful direction, and their enthusiasm and zeal would be of invaluable service to them. There can be no question that there has sprung up of late years amongst the leisured class of women an ardent desire to be of some use in the world, to do some good before they pass away, to be something more than mere ornaments of life. Such a laudable desire should be encouraged by the nation. That tendency which we see on all sides should be given a legitimate opening. The amount of unpaid religious, philanthropic, and social remedial work which is being carried on by women is enormous. Witness the labours of such women as Miss Octavia Hill, Miss Robinson, Miss Weston, Miss Davenport Hill, Miss Ellice Hopkins, Miss Potter, Miss Kinnaird, Miss Cobden, Miss Rye, Miss Cons, Miss L. Twining, and a hundred others whom I might mention. We may or may not approve the objects those ladies have in view. We may or may not believe in their discretion or their wisdom; but we cannot but respect the self-sacrifice and the devotion with which, in their different lines, and with the best powers they possess, they are voluntarily labouring for the good of others. Such self-sacrifice, such devotion, such faith, cannot fail to make its influence felt on a selfish and cynical world. If there is much to lament in the present condition of society, if there is alienation of class from class, if the rich man fears the poor and the poor man hates the rich, if the world is out of joint, and we cry in our despair that faith and virtue, honour and love, sympathy and brotherly kindness have vanished from the face of the earth, if in our moments of despondency and of weakness we should be tempted to exclaim that our upper classes care for nothing but sport and the gratification of selfish pleasure, that our middle classes are lost to all higher aims than the pursuit of wealth, and that our working classes are wallowing in the mire of drunkenness and violence, let us but turn to the work of these noble women, and of others who are labouring in similar undertakings, for the spiritual,

moral, or material welfare of their fellow creatures, and we shall be forced to confess that the women of England refuse to despair of the world, and that, holding aloft in the darkness which surrounds them the beacon light of their own virtue and self-sacrifice, they are setting an example worthy of imitation, and are acting the angel's part in their devoted efforts to guide the footsteps of mankind into higher and nobler paths. Therefore, I say, my Lords, that such women are worthy of the highest honour their country can bestow upon them, and are we to refuse to such women as these the right to share in the management of those social matters in which they take so deep an interest, in which they are so useful, in which they are so well versed, and which form so important a part of municipal government? I hope not. I trust that the House by its vote to-night will express its conviction that women by their great work in social reform have earned the right to a voice in the local government of their country, and to engage for its benefit in this social war.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR put the Question, that the Bill be read a second time, and declared, without challenge, "the not contents have it."

*EARL FORTESCUE: My Lords, I rise to move the Amendment of which I have given notice.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The Bill has been rejected without a Division.

EARL FORTESCUE: I had not understood that. Is it really so?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I must call the noble Earl's attention to the fact that I waited for some time before I put the Question. I said the not-contents had it, and my decision was not challenged.

EARL FORTESCUE: I thought I should have been called upon. I have the misfortune of being rather deaf and partially blind, and I was not aware of what was going on.

EARL GRANVILLE: Perhaps, my Lords, you will allow the Question to be put again.

*THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I would suggest that, as the noble Lord was unaware of what was going on, the Question should be allowed to be put again. I understand some of your Lordships to say they did challenge the Division.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I did not hear the challenge.

Question again put.

Their Lordships divided:—Contents 23; Not-Contents 108.

HORSEFLESH (SALE FOR FOOD) BILL.

(No. 41.)

House in Committee, on re-commitment, according to Order.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, I have to move an Amendment to the 1st Clause, which provides that no person shall sell, offer, or expose or keep for sale, any horseflesh for human food, elsewhere than in a shop containing a conspicuous notice that horseflesh is sold there, by inserting after "food" the words "cooked or uncooked, alone or accompanied by or mixed with any other substance."

Amendment agreed to.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, I have to propose the introduction of a new clause, which was originally part of the Bill, but has been struck out in the Grand Committee. I propose to insert after Clause 1. this clause: "No person shall sell horseflesh for human food, cooked or uncooked, alone or accompanied by or mixed with any other substance, to any purchaser who has not asked to be supplied with horseflesh." I think, my Lords, it is required for the purpose of carrying out the other clause, and will be useful machinery for making that clause more effectual. It is is clearly necessary that care should be taken in this matter in regard to the manufacture of sausages.

LORD THRING: My Lords, I oppose the introduction of this clause. I think this is a most oppressive Bill, especially to the poor, who, by dealing at a shop labelled as this measure requires, with words four inches in length announcing that horseflesh is sold there, would be subject to the jeers of those who saw them enter. They would be laughed at for going into a cook-shop where sausages of that kind were sold. The poor may object, therefore, to having these places called "Horseflesh-shops." I would suggest to your Lordships that a man cannot go into a shop of that

description to eat what is considered to be inferior food without being exposed to the jeering of his companions, because over the shop would be painted in large letters "Horseflesh." The law provides that if deception is practised in the sale of articles of food, a penalty shall be inflicted. Therefore, if a man asks for beef and gets horseflesh, the seller would have to pay a penalty of £20. Does that govern this Bill, or does it not govern this Bill? Why are we, after a most careful Act has been passed to prevent the substitution of one kind of food for another, to pass a Bill of this character, dealing with the food of the poor, simply because we think we are promoting their interests by that interference?

EARL BEAUCHAMP: I would point out that the noble Lord's observations applied to the principle of the Bill, whereas we are now in Committee considering a special clause which the promoters of the Bill deem necessary in order to carry out its object—namely, to protect the poor against being supplied with horseflesh, when they pay for ordinary meat. The clause is also required to prevent the honest trader from being undersold. I submit that the Bill is not open to the interpretation which the noble Lord has put upon it. He talks about it being an unjust Bill, but its purpose, a very simple one, is to prevent the poor man being deceived. So far from its being unjust and oppressive, it is a Bill for doing justice to the poor and to the honest trader alike. As regards the Bill not being required, because there is already a measure regulating the sale of food, the noble Lord has had a good deal of experience in the framing of Bills, and I think he will see that this is not at all unjust or oppressive. In 1886, after the passing of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, I received a letter from Manchester complaining of the sale of large quantities of horseflesh, and asking that such restrictions should be placed on the sale of it as would enable purchasers to know whether they were purchasing horseflesh or not. Though the Local Government Board had full cognizance of what was going on, the Inspectors reported that they were unable to act in the matter. Now, my Lords, I venture to think that the Manchester people and the Local Government Board are at least as likely to know how the existing law is being enforced as the noble Lord. Then they submitted a draft Bill. I need not read now the reasons put forward by the Local Government Board in the matter. I confess I cannot agree with the noble Lord that this Bill is unjust and oppressive, unless it is unjust and oppressive to take care that the poor man only pays the proper price of the food which he obtains. If that be so, it is unjust and oppressive, not otherwise.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I am not going to say anything against the principle of the clause. I accept the Bill generally as a proper one, but I think the wording of the clause is open to objection. I would call attention to the effect of this section. The first section provides that in no case shall horseflesh be sold, except in a shop which shall have painted over it a notice in letters four inches long that horseflesh is sold there. Persons selling horseflesh in any other place are subject to a penalty. Now, the question which arises upon this proposed clause is this: In such a shop as that ought it to be an offence if a customer goes in and asks for a piece of meat to sell him a piece of horseflesh? I quite agree that except in a shop where it was notified that they were selling horseflesh that ought to be so, but I do not know that that ought to be the case where, if a man asks for meat, he must expect to get horseflesh. If he goes into a horseflesh shop, what he asks for really is horseflesh, and I do not see that any wrong is done. It does not say that if the purchaser intending to buy meat asks for meat and gets horseflesh the penalty will be inflicted. A man might go into a shop labelled as selling horseflesh, might point to some and ask for so much of it, knowing well that it was horseflesh, and yet the vendor would be liable under this clause because the purchaser would not "have asked to be supplied with horseflesh." It ought to be borne in mind that the shop would be labelled as selling horseflesh, so that the customer would be put on his guard against horseflesh if he did not desire it. If a customer intending to buy meat asked for it and was supplied with horse-flesh, that was a case which could be dealt with by the general law.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: With regard to the letters of description four inches long, notifying that the shop is registered for the sale of horseflesh, I do not think that is very unreasonable. The notice must be made conspicuous, otherwise customers entering the shop after dark would not see it. Those who are most conversant with the matter think that would be a great misfortune, and I do ask your Lordships to take care that a purchaser coming in and asking for meat shall not be supplied with horseflesh. Therefore, if he has to go there after dark I do not think there is anything oppressive or too stringent in this new clause.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, I think this clause is necessary to carry out the object of the Bill. It is hardly conceivable that anybody going to such a shop would expect to get meat supplied to him, though, of course, it depends upon what is said at the time by the parties. I think this clause is required.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I would suggest that the object of the clause would be effected if it constituted the offence, supplying horseflesh where "other than horseflesh" should be asked for. I should like to say that the clause goes rather beyond what my noble Friend has alluded to. If the person who asks for anything other than horseflesh, gets horseflesh, then he is supplied with what he has not asked for. He goes into a horseflesh shop and asks for a joint of meat. He buys it knowing that it is a horseflesh shop, and yet the man who sells it to him is liable to a penalty.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: I would point out that though the shop would be labelled, the words announcing the sale of horseflesh might not be seen at night.

LORD HERSCHELL: That is so; but that is a matter which might be easily met. It might be well to consider whether you should not provide that the notice that horseflesh is sold there shall be so put up as to be legible at all times when the shop is open. I think that would be very reasonable, and certainly would carry out the spirit of the Bill, so that anybody going there after dark might see the notice. I think that would meet any objection to the clause, and would cover the cases where meat or anything else might be asked for where a man might complain that he was supplied with something he had not intended. My objection to the clause is that it punishes the one man for selling that which the other knew perfectly well he was buying.

*LORD BALFOUR: My Lords, I would put the case of a shop where horseflesh, as well as other things, are sold. It does not rest altogether upon the question whether the joint of meat is that for which the purchaser has asked. It may be that the purchaser asks for "cooked meat," "sausages," or some preparation, the composition of which is not evident from inspection, and unless there is some distinct announcement that it is horseflesh that is being sold, I think there is some danger that those who do not desire to buy horseflesh will be imposed upon. Therefore, I hope your Lordships will agree to the insertion of the clause. I can only say further that it has been brought to my knowledge that a very large number of the population in the district of Manchester and Salford are anxious that this Bill should pass. My Lords, there has been a petition sent in in favour of this Bill signed by 30,000 people. Those who know that district will know that a petition of that description could not have been got up contrary to the wish of the majority of the population. Another petition has also been sent up from that district, asking that the clause now under consideration should be inserted. I sincerely hope that in order to make the Bill efficient, that clause will be inserted. I may also point out that the clause which has been struck out had been carefully adjusted in the House of Commons and the words approved by the Attorney General. The whole scheme of the Bill is almost exactly following that of the Margarine Bill which your Lordships passed two years ago, and I earnestly hope the Bill will pass in a workable and efficient form.

LORD THRING: I suppose the Committee understand that the clause applies to any purchaser who has not asked for horseflesh but something else. After the elaborate way in which this Bill has been framed, it is better to put exactly what it means.

*LORD BALFOUR: No possible harm can happen to the seller if he sells horse-

flesh for what it is. The clause now proposed is that—

"No person shall sell horseflesh for human food, cooked or uncooked, alone or accompanied by, or mixed with any other substance, to any purchaser who has not asked to be supplied with horseflesh."

Surely there can be no hardship in that. Sausages partly made of horseflesh may be so sold, and then there can be no hardship.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: I would suggest that the end of the proposed clause should read "to any purchaser who has asked to be supplied with something other than horseflesh."

LORD HERSCHELL: I would accept those words as an Amendment of the clause.

Clause as amended added.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: I have to move the addition to Clause 5 of these words:

"And if any horseflesh is proved to have been exposed for sale to the public in any shop, store, or place, other than such shop, store or place as in the 2nd Section mentioned, without anything to show that it was not intended for sale for human food, the onus of proving that it was not so intended shall rest upon the person exposing it for ssle."

LORD HERSCHELL: I should accept those words except in cases where meat is supplied in a shop or place mentioned in the 1st Section. I think it is quite right to throw the onus on the person selling, of proving that it was not so intended.

Amendment agreed to.

INDECENT ADVERTISEMENTS BILL.

(No. 34.)

House in Committee on re-commitment; according to order.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Upon Clause 3 I should like to call the attention of the noble Lord in charge of the Bill to what I think is a defect in it. I do not propose to move any Amendment now, but only to call attention to the matter. The mode in which these things are distributed is made part of the offence; but one form in which these indecent productions are circulated, by being pushed under doors or otherwise delivered at houses, is not made part of the clause. It seems to me that is one of the most mischievous practices, and one at which no doubt the section was intended to be aimed. I simply call the noble Lord's attention to the defect, and I hope it may be remedied.

LORD KIMBERLEY: My Lords, that point did not escape attention; but the Committee were unable to frame the clause so as to meet the case of throwing down areas. If any form of words can be suggested for that purpose, I quite agree that it is desirable to include this form of distribution.

LORD MILLTOWN: The clause already contains the words "or delivers or attempts to deliver."

LORD KIMBERLEY: That is only with regard to public places.

Clause agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: On Clause 5, prohibiting advertisements relating to certain diseases, your Lordships will observe that the object with which that clause is obviously framed would in most cases be covered by the provisions of Section 3, which prohibits the fixing of indecent advertisements in public places. The cases outside Clause 3, but which are covered by Clause 5, might, I think, be held to include some which were never in the contemplation of those who framed the Bill; such, for instance, as the *bonâ fide* exhibition of an advertisement of a medical work in a bookseller's window. It appears to me to be a very serious thing indeed to make that an offence, and so prevent the legitimate sale of medical works. I quite sympathize with the intention of the framers of the clause in preventing these things getting into the hands of young persons, but I think the clause is altogether too wide, and therefore move that it be omitted.

LORD HERSCHELL: I may say, as this clause is before the Committee, it might be limited so as to meet the difficulty raised by the noble and learned Lord; but I think that the scheme of the clause is to prevent these advertisements being distributed in the streets or stuck up in public places. To that there can be no reasonable objection. I think that, as regards the matters referred to in this clause, they might well be applied to persons passing along as well as to streets, highways, and public places.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Salis-

BURY): I will move to strike the clause out if the noble Lord objects to it.

LORD HERSCHELL: It is not my clause.

Clause omitted.

Report of Amendments to be received on Monday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 77.)

SALE OF GOODS BILL.—(No. 49.)

SECOND READING.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I shall trouble you with very few observations in moving the Second Reading of this Bill. It is intended to codify an important branch of the law. The law relating to bills of exchange and commercial instruments has already been codified to the great advantage of the public. I do not think there can be any question but that that legislation has been a success, and it has, since it became law, been imitated by the Legislatures of some of our Colonies adopting the Act, and it is now proposed to introduce a similar measure in the United States. There can be no question but that the general codification of our law would be an immense advantage. That result can only be arrived at by dealing separately with specific branches of the law which are capable of being treated in that manner. I consider that the sale of goods is one of those subjects. The present Bill has been drafted by the learned Gentleman who drew the Bills of Exchange Act, and I have myself spent a considerable time in its construction. Although I cannot profess to tell the House that the Bill contains an absolutely complete and accurate representation of the law, I believe that substantially it does so, and if it be referred to the Standing Committee on Law, and if that Committee thought fit to refer it to a Sub-Committee, its details could be carefully considered and elaborated.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, while I have certainly no intention to do anything which would obstruct the progress of the Bill, I desire to point out that there is nothing so dangerous as a codification of the law which is intended to be exhaustive. No human ingenuity can deal by anticipation with every case which may arise. The value of the Common Law, which consists in the application of principles to cases as they arise, lies in its elasticity; but in the iron framework of legislation it very often happens that an unforeseen question arises, and then it is discovered that, while the Common Law has been excluded, the question which has arisen has not been included. I only point to that as a caution against dealing hastily with the Bill before the House, and not with a view of making any Motion adverse to it.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I should like to explain, in reply to my noble and learned Friend, that in the present Bill there is an express provision that the rules of theCommon Law should be incorporated with it, save in so far as they were inconsistent with the express provisions of the Bill itself.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee on Bills relating to law, &c.

IRISH FISHERIES.

THE EARL OF HOWTH, in rising to direct the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the letter in the *Times* of the 17th of May from the Chief Secretary for Ireland referring to certain Irish industries, and addressed to Sir Albert Rollit, M.P., and to move that a period has arrived when it is expedient for Her Majesty's Government to declare whether it is their intention to tender any material aid to the Irish fishery industry, said: I am well aware how great the difficulties of a financial nature have been in this matter in the way of Her Majesty's Government. I certainly do not mean at the present time to press for any great liberality on their part, but while I do not desire to suggest any further liberality on the part of the Government, at the same time, in this fourth Session of the present Parliament, I hardly think Her Majesty's Government can take exception to the terms of the Motion which I have made, that they shall declare "whether it is their intention to tender any material aid to the Irish fishery industry. Last Friday, correspondence which had passed between Sir Albert Rollit and Mr. Balfour, the Secretary for Ireland, was published in the *Times*, and I propose to read to your Lordships the two letters. Sir Albert Rollit wrote:—

"Dear Mr. Balfour,—You were good enough to say, when I saw you yesterday upon the

subject of Irish railways, that you would inform me of the present position and prospects of the industrial measures promised for Ireland. I shall be very glad if you will kindly do this, and if you will, so far as possible, expedite the progress of the Irish railway and other remedial Bills. My anxiety that every reasonable wish on the part of Irishmen shall, if possible, be conceded, and that the firm basis of a union of interests should be established between the two countries, is my reason for approaching you on this matter, and I feel sure that it will be accepted as a sufficient one."

The reply of the Chief Secretary was:—

"Dear Sir Albert,—I hope in a few days to re-introduce my Drainage Bills, and at the same time to propose a measure which will facilitate the construction of light railways in those parts of Ireland which most need them, and which, from the nature of the case, are least able to provide such railways for themselves."

"The Drainage Bills have, of course, long been ready. There has been a greater delay than I should have wished in the preparation of the Railway Bills, through reasons which at this moment it is unnecessary to go into; but this will not, I think, in any way imperil the progress of the measures if, as I hope, they are accepted by all Parties in the House in a friendly spirit. I need not say that I quite agree with you as to the extreme desirability of furthering in every possible way the material prosperity of Ireland."

As regards the response to Sir Albert Rollit's letter, the spirit in which it was written by the Chief Secretary is, I need not say, highly satisfactory. But there are one or two matters to which he alluded to which I will refer. One was the allusion to obstruction. I think it only right to say that the obstruction which is most to be feared to the passage of such measures as are referred to in Mr. Balfour's letter is from those Irish Members who object to additional burdens being imposed upon land to provide guarantees for Irish railways. Of course, there are arguments which may be used on both sides in this matter, but I hope some early opportunity may be taken of thoroughly dealing with it. The next paragraph of that letter to which I will allude is with reference to the light railways. They are, of course, in every sense desirable, and are the subject of recommendation by the Royal Commission. Nearly all the light railways lead down to the seaside, and therefore are to the advantage of the fisheries; but they would be of very little use unless a reduction in the rate of carriage for fish were effected. If the Government had had the question of the Irish industries at heart they might have found many opportunities of placing important measures on the Estimates and of getting them passed without opposition. I venture to say that if Lord Randolph Churchill were still Chancellor of the Exchequer, instead of Mr. Goschen, the Government might meet the matter in a more generous spirit. I hope Her Majesty's Government will strongly appreciate the desirability of, at a future period, giving a faithful pledge that the fisheries of the country will be encouraged. The Irish industries have been mentioned in no fewer than three Addresses to the Throne, and the late Government in 1883 passed a Light Railway and Tramway Act, by which they incurred a responsibility of £2,000,000. I desire, my Lords, to endeavour to impress Her Majesty's Government with the responsibilities that are attached to these industries, and therefore I go back as far as the time when Lord Randolph Churchill was Chancellor of the Exchequer. He fully recognized those responsibilities, and if he were still filling that office I think, perhaps, the Irish industries might have had a more advanced position in the legislation of Parliament. We have, however, only touched the fringe of the subject, and it is important for us to consider when we come to dwell on the interests of Ireland what amount of financial assistance we may expect from the Government, because it is in reality a question of financial responsibility, and the way in which that is dealt with will clearly prove whether the Government is or is not willing to help those industries. When we consider that the efforts of the late Government did some little good for the Irish industries, we may see to what extent the Imperial Government might have done more. It is, however, perfectly certain that when they appointed the Royal Commission to inquire into the condition of those industries, that was a measure of immense popularity in this country. To this day we see notices and letters from time to time on the subject in the newspapers, and I am quite sure that readers of newspapers must be quite tired of seeing letters written on the subject of these Irish industries. There is not the slightest doubt of their im-

portance, but from the interest taken by Her Majesty's Government in them, there has been a very remarkable departure in this matter. It has been very clearly laid down by the Royal Commission that drainage should occupy the first position in legislative interference; the second position must be taken by the fisheries, and the third by the railways. I quite admit the difficulties of Her Majesty's Government, which probably account for the style of the explanations which have been made on the subject, but I sincerely trust that before the labours of the present Session are at an end we may look forward to more liberal treatment. I should like to put before your Lordships the present conditions of the Irish industries, and I may say they are favourable. In 1883, as I have said, the late Government, without very much ostentation, assisted one section of them by making the Exchequer of the country liable for £2,000,000 at 2 per cent, representing £40,000 per annum, under their Light Railway and Tramway Act. Owing to defects in that Act the occupiers have not taken as much advantage of it as might have been expected, but the Royal Commission reported that the flaw was capable of easy amendment. Only £13,000 per annum is, up to the present, being expended on the light railways and tramways, and, therefore, there is actually a sum of at least £27,000 a year, representing a capital of £1,300,000 at the disposal of the present Government for any step they may take, without any further drain upon the Exchequer. That was a free gift or legacy from the Liberal Government to the present Government. My interpretation of Mr. Balfour's letter is that if it is possible for legislation to take place, the Government will do something more in the matter this year, but I think that the light railways must be placed to the credit of the late Government. I speak strongly on this subject, my Lords, for the purpose of securing liberal support from the Government to the Irish fisheries. They have a free hand in the matter. They are not hampered with the railways, and they have this sum in hand. That is a strong argument in our favour, and I hope we shall have something done by next year. There is another reason for liberality on the part of the Government. It is quite clear they gained great popularity by their promise to bring forward some measure, and it is perfectly clear that they have not earned that popularity. Their conscience must tell them so. I am sure the conscience of the Government must tell them they owe the Irish industries a great deal on account of the popularity they have secured on that account, and I hope under these circumstances, my Lords, Her Majesty's Government will deal liberally in this matter. In conclusion, I venture, with every respect, to impress upon your Lordships again, that references have repeatedly been introduced into the Addresses to Her Gracious Majesty to the subject of these Irish industries. My Lords, as I said before, it is an important question. You are not called upon to do very much, or to show very much liberality; but I sincerely trust we shall hear something very soon to show that we may expect some liberality from the Government in this matter. I may venture to remind your Lordships that it is going to be brought forward in another place.

Moved to resolve—

"That a period has arrived when it is expedient for Her Majesty's Government to declare whether it is their intention to tender any material aid to the Irish fishery industry."—(The Lord Howth, *E. Howth.*)

EARL CADOGAN: My Lords, I have endeavoured on several occasions to reply to Motions similar to this one on the part of the noble Earl on the question of Irish industries, and especially of Irish Fisheries. The noble Earl has now moved,

"That a period has arrived when it is expedient for Her Majesty's Government to delare whether it is their intention to tender any material aid to the Irish fishery industry."

And he has founded his speech on the fact that the Chief Secretary for Ireland has addressed a letter to a gentleman lately, in which it is stated that the Government intend, in the course of the present year, to lay on the Table of the other House the Bills for arterial drainage in Ireland, which were brought in but not passed last Session, and that in addition it is in contemplation to introduce a measure for providing light railways in that country. Under those circumstances I had hardly thought that this would be the time chosen by the noble Earl for asking the Government

to state what are their intentions as to those measures. When my right hon. Friend introduces the Bills, he will declare at the same time what is the policy of the Government and what are the details of the measures. The noble Earl has referred to the order in which the various recommendations of the Royal Commission were dealt with by the Government, and he appears to think that because the Chief Secretary for Ireland proposes to introduce measures relating to arterial drainage, and also a measure in regard to light railways, therefore the Government are neglecting the question of the fisheries. If he will look at the second Report of the Royal Commission he will find, under the head "Fisheries," that the Commissioners speak of light railways as being calculated to facilitate the carrying fish to market, and thereby to aid and improve the fishing industry in Ireland. Therefore, in introducing a measure as to railways, it cannot be said that they are neglecting the fishing industry. On the other hand, there is little chance of passing a Fisheries Bill in the same Session as the other measures to which I have referred. I hope, therefore, that the noble Earl will again accept my assurance that the Government are in earnest, and have all along been in earnest, not only in appointing the Royal Commission, but also in the introduction of measures to carry out the recommendations contained in its very able Report. I wish it were in my power to give further information at the present moment, but from what I have been able to say on the matter the intentions of the Government can hardly be doubted.

THE EARL OF HOWTH: My Lords, I accept the statement of the noble Earl. At the same time, I think there ought to be a very distinct and decided declaration made by the Chief Secretary for Ireland in reference to the measures to be adopted with regard to the fisheries of the country. My object in speaking as warmly as I have done is to advocate the interests of Ireland by the encouragement of its industries, and not from any desire whatever to make statements which could embarrass the Government. I do hope the noble Earl will impress the necessity of dealing with this matter upon the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and of making as clear a declaration as possible. My Lords, I can only say again, in conclusion, that I have been actuated solely by a desire for the advancement of the Irish industries.

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.
(No. 12.)

Committed to a Committee of the whole House on Friday next.

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock till To-morrow at a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 20th May, 1889.

MAIL CONTRACT (SCRABSTER, SCAPA PIER, AND STROMNESS).

Copy ordered—

"Contract between Her Majesty's Postmaster General and the North of Scotland and Orkney and Shetland Steam Navigation Company, dated the 27th day of March, 1889, for the conveyance of Mails between Scrabster, Scapa Pier, and Stromness, with copy of Treasury Minute thereon."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed (No. 156.)

COUNTY COURT JUDGES.

Address for—

"Return showing for the years 1887 and 1888 the number of days on which County Court Judges sat in their respective courts ditinguishing the days on which they sat by themselves and by deputy."—(*Mr. Hobhouse.*)

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—CHIEF RECEIVER.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland whether before the Vote for the newly-created office of Chief Receiver comes on, Papers on the subject will be laid before Parliament explaining how the abolished office of Receiving Master has been revived under another name?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Ireland): Yes, Sir; Papers will

be laid before Parliament, but I cannot admit the suggestion contained in the question.

INDIA—MORTALITY OF CHILDREN IN ASSAM TEA GARDENS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Government have inquired into the truth of the allegations contained in the letter of the Indian Association of Calcutta, No. 343, dated the 12th April, 1888,—

"That in 1884 the death rate among children in tea gardens had risen from 39·7 to 44 per thousand. While the death rate increased, the birth rate gradually fell; in 1882 it was 39·7 per thousand; in 1883 it was 34·3; and in 1884 it further decreased to 32·7 per thousand. The Chief Commissioner of Assam thus explains this excessive mortality—Neglect on the part of the women, who are unable to do their daily task and at the same time look after the children, and who cannot afford to do work and stay at home, accounts in a great measure for the high mortality among children. . . . The conditions of child life in a tea garden are altogether so unfavourable that the wonder is how so many children succeed in passing childhood's stage. A coolie woman gets a variable amount of leave for her confinement. After that, if the infant is not strangled at birth, she must either take it out to her work, or leave it behind with no one to look after it. In the former case, tied to its mother's back or left in the nearest drain, it is exposed to the extreme of heat and cold, to wind and rain; in the latter, the child gets half starved, and so paves its way to death from some bowel disorder, or succeeds in cutting short its career by a fall or a roll into the open fire. So alive are coolie women to these facts that to avoid the trouble of bringing up their children under such circumstances, abortion is frequently resorted to, and 'dais' who produce it often find their business a very profitable one;"

And whether the Government intends to take any action thereon?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The action taken by the Secretary of State and Government of India in this matter will be found recorded in a Despatch from the Government of India of 22nd January, 1889, presented to the House of Lords in March last. The Chief Commissioner of Assam, who only joined the province a year ago, has found it necessary to make a personal tour through the plantations before submitting the report which the Government of India has called for; and it is necessary that the Government of India should be guided by his opinion before placing any definite suggestions before the Secretary of State.

ACTION OF SCOTCH PAROCHIAL BOARDS.

MR. MACKINTOSH (Invernessshire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that Lady Matheson of the Lews, in consequence of the action of the Parochial Boards of the island, has been assessed directly, and compelled to pay the poor rates due by all her crofters rented at £4 per annum and under; whether the poor rates due by those whose rents have been judicially fixed, but paid by Lady Matheson, amounted on 9th April, 1889, to £567 19s. 7d. after giving credit for £14 13s. 5d. paid by crofters; whether it is the fact that no rents have been paid to Lady Matheson on which the rates have to be levied; and whether, since Lady Matheson has received no rents, but has had to pay not only her own assessments for the poor, as owner, but also the rates of the tenants, some relief for the tenant's rates so paid can be granted to her?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): It is the fact that until the year now current Lady Matheson has been assessed directly, and compelled to pay the poor rates due by all her crofters rented at £4 per annum and under. The amount of such occupiers' rates paid by Lady Matheson on account of crofters whose rents have been judicially fixed amounts to £582 13s., and of this there has been recovered from the crofters only £18 16s. 4d. Of the rents of the holdings on which Lady Matheson has thus had to pay both her own and the crofters' rates only a very small proportion has been paid. The case of Lady Matheson in this matter is one of extreme and singular hardship, but the law does not provide any source from which relief can be granted to her.

IMPORTS OF SUGAR.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state the amount of sugar imported from Her Majesty's Colonies in 1863 as compared with last year; and whether he can state the amount of foreign sugar imported in 1863, and also last year?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): I am informed by the Statistical Department of the Customs that in 1863 the sugar imported from British Possessions and Colonies amounted to 5,573,719 cwts., and in 1888 to 3,446,951 cwts., showing a decrease in our colonial imports of 2,126,768 cwts. The imports from foreign countries were, in 1863, 5,448,392 cwts.; and in 1888, 21,282,199 cwts., showing an increase in foreign imports of 15,833,807 cwts.

THE CROFTER COMMISSIONERS.

MR. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate when the Crofter Commissioners will be able to visit Shetland; and, what arrangements have been made for facilitating the hearing of applications in the more distant parts of the islands?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I understand that the Commission is to visit Shetland in August. I am unable to state what arrangements have been made as to the procedure when there, but have no doubt that the Commissioners will take every means to secure that applications shall be heard with the least possible inconvenience to the parties.

PORTUGUESE INDEBTEDNESS TO ENGLAND.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government will appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the circumstance of the Portuguese Government owing England a sum of three millions, together with interest extending over 75 years, with a view of taking the usual steps for the recovery of the amounts now due?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.W.): It is a fact that it was shown, by an examination of the accounts between this country and Portugal, which took place in 1815, that a balance was due by Portugal of £2,489,240 19s. 9¼d. on account of arms, ammunition of war, and other supplies which had been furnished by this country to Portugal during the Peninsular War (1808-1814). This balance has not been repaid to this country, nor has Portugal paid any interest upon it. Her Majesty's Government do not think that any practical advantage would at present result from the appointment of such a Committee.

THE NAVIGATION OF THE ZAMBESI.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, considering the great importance of the navigation of the Zambesi River to the commerce of the world, and also the dangerous position of missionaries and other British subjects on Lake Nyassa, the highway to which is by the River Zambesi, he will take immediate steps by telegraph to hire at Durban a suitable vessel of light draught of water, to equip and man her from Her Majesty's ships now stationed in South Africa, and despatch her with as little delay as possible to make a survey of the Zambesi River from the sea as far as the point where the Shiré River enters the Zambesi from Lake Nyassa?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): As I have before stated, Her Majesty's ship *Stork*, with her staff of qualified surveying officers, will have commenced work at the entrance of the Zambesi early in July. This is an essential preliminary to any inland survey.

SIR J. SWINBURNE: Was it the case that the *Stork* which has been sent to the Zambesi River was of such deep draught of water that it was impossible for her to proceed up the river?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I believe that was the case.

SIR J. SWINBURNE: Then will not the noble Lord take steps to have a vessel equipped with a higher draught of water?

LORD G. HAMILTON: It is necessary, first of all, to ascertain whether there is a sufficient draught of water over the bar. That is essential in the first instance.

ARMY RANK.

GENERAL SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary for War whether, under Clause 11 (b) of the Royal Warrant (Army) of 1887, a Major who has completed seven years' service in the substantive rank of Major, can only be

promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel on half pay, provided he applies for that promotion on the actual day that his seven years of service are completed; and whether, if such is the case, and as it is not distinctly stated in the Warrant, there would be any objection to making the fact officially known to the Officers of the Army generally?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): It was made known to Officers by a circular addressed to the Colonels of regiments on the 1st of May, 1888, that half-pay promotion must be claimed by a Major on or before the date he completes seven years' service as a substantive Major, or his title to the promotion would lapse. This promotion is the survival on behalf of officers who became Majors before the 1st of January, 1887, of a vested right to promotion to Lieutenant-Colonel on half-pay on completing seven years' service; but that promotion was incidental to removal from the regiment. Removal after seven years is no longer compulsory; but if an Officer wishes to continue under the old Warrant he must be limited to the regimental service allowed under it.

IRELAND—THE PONSONBY ESTATE.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state why Philip Dea, the tenant on the Ponsonby Estate, in the county of Cork, who was arrested last week on a charge of ploughing up his own land, was charged before Major Caddell, R.M., at Youghal, and not before the local justices; whether Major Caddell conducted the preliminary investigation into Dea's case with closed doors in the police barrack, and, if so, is such a practice legal; is the report true that Major Caddell was closeted in the police barrack with the police for a considerable time before Dea was charged before him, and, if so, is such action on the part of a magistrate sanctioned by the Government; and has his attention been called to the fact that Dea was refused bail, and sent handcuffed to Cork Gaol, though substantial bail was offered by two solvent shopkeepers, and though there is a well fortified gaol in Youghal where Dea would have been near his solicitor?

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg also to ask if the Chief Secretary had definite information as to the circumstances under which Dea was arrested at Gortroe, county Cork, on Monday 13th instant, whilst ploughing on his holding, confined in the Youghal police barracks until Tuesday, and then brought before Resident Magistrate Caddell; whether, in view of the fact that the notice under the 7th Section of the Land Act, 1887, is alleged to have been served in the case, but the necessary magistrate's order for possession had not been obtained, and therefore the legality or sufficiency of the notice not proved or ascertained, the police authorities were acting in accordance with their instructions in interfering with or arresting Mr. Dea; why, if he was alleged to have committed an offence, he was not summoned before a petty sessions court in the ordinary way instead of being summarily arrested; if it is true that Mr. Dea was taken on Tuesday from Youghal and imprisoned in Cork Gaol; and, why bail was refused by Mr. Caddell, though offered on behalf of the accused man?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I understand that Philip Dea and nine other caretakers on the Ponsonby estate, upon being served with summonses for the possession of the holdings, commenced to plough up the corn crops growing on the farms. Dea was twice warned by the police that he was acting illegally and committing a malicious injury, and called upon by them to stop. This he refused to do, necessitating his arrest. He was brought before Colonel Caddell, R.M., who was in temporary command of the Youghal district, and charged with the malicious and wilful injury. The fact of the service of the notice under the 7th Section of the Land Act of 1887, constituted the man a caretaker irrespective of any subsequent proceedings before Magistrates for a warrant of possession. The police acted in the usual way in arresting a man persisting in committing a malicious injury. A summons would not have met the case, as the man refused to desist. The preliminary inquiry referred to was not open to the general public; but Dea was represented at it by his solicitor. It is not true that Colonel Caddell was closeted with the

police before the inquiry. No shopkeepers offered themselves as bail for the man; but his solicitor made an application for his admittance to bail. This Colonel Caddell refused, as Dea would not undertake to refrain from further injury to the farm. Dea was remanded for seven days. He was placed in the district prison, Cork, as it was not competent to confine him at Youghal, where there is only a bridewell, which is limited to prisoners on remand for not longer than three days.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Why should this man who was in the position of a tenant, and therefore engaged in ploughing his own field, have been arrested without the option of a civil remedy?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I presume that the police were bound to prevent him from acting maliciously.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Have the police been made acquainted with the effect of the 7th Section of the Land Act?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should imagine not; but the police seem to have been acquainted with the facts of this case.

MR. CLANCY: Why was Mr. Dea sent handcuffed to Cork Gaol?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have received no information on that point.

MR. CLANCY: Why was Dea charged before Major Caddell, the Resident Magistrate, and then sent to Cork Gaol instead of having been taken before the Local Justices?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am unable to say.

MR. CLANCY: Is that circumstance to be explained in any way by the fact that a few days before this man was charged before Colonel Caddell, the Local Justices had admitted some other persons who were charged before them to bail?

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucestershire, Cirencester): May I ask the Home Secretary if the police have power to arrest a man without a warrant under circumstances like these because they believe that he is acting improperly?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I am not acquainted with the facts of the case, but I understand that he was arrested in the act of committing wilful injury.

MR. FLYNN: If the notice which this man had received was found to be legally insufficient or defective in some way, are the police entitled to take on themselves to determine the legality of a certain order under the 7th Section of the Land Act?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the police acted illegally the man will have his remedy.

DUBLIN GOLF CLUB.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the statement in the public Press, that the Dublin Port and Docks Board have leased to a number of private individuals, who call themselves "The Golf Club," a portion of the promontory known as the North Bull, near Clontarf, in the County of Dublin, and that the club in question have utilized the piece of ground referred to by erecting on it a clubhouse; and whether the North Bull is public property, of which the Port and the Docks Board are only trustees; and if so, by what right the Board have diverted it to private uses, and so enabled a few private individu- also, if they so please, to exclude from it the public, who have hitherto used it as a recreation ground?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have been favoured with a report from the Dublin Port and Docks Board, from which it appears that it is not the case that they have leased any portion of the North Bull ground as alleged, and that, as a matter of fact, the Golf Club play almost wholly on that portion of the ground which belongs to Mr. Vernon, of Clontarf Castle. The Port and Docks Board have permitted on their portion of the ground the erection of a small hut, subject to removal whenever they may so direct. The public are not excluded from the North Bull ground.

MR. CLANCY: Have these people erected a structure there?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have told the hon. Gentleman that a hut has been allowed to be built by the persons who own the land.

ALLEGED ATTACK BY THE POLICE IN MALLOW.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ire-

land whether he has seen the Report of a meeting of the Mallow Town Commissioners, held on the 14th instant, from which it appears that complaints were made that, on the night of Saturday, 27th ultimo, an attack was made on several of the inhabitants of the town by a body of police passing through, and many of them severely injured, and that the Town Commissioners have asked the County Inspector to hold a sworn inquiry into all the circumstances of the alleged attack; and whether, in view of the frequent complaints of a similar character as to assaults by the police, he will direct the Constabularly Authorities to order the County Inspector to hold the sworn inquiry asked for.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that it is the case that the Mallow Town Commissioners appear to have passed a resolution calling on the County Inspector to hold an inquiry into the conduct of both the police and the people on the occasion in question. The Report shows that the police were proceeding on duty through Mallow when they were hooted and stoned. They dispersed the crowd. So far as they can ascertain, no one was severely injured, nor is there any ground for the holding of a sworn inquiry.

MR. FLYNN: In view of the fact that my information is of a directly contrary character to that which has been given to the right hon. Gentleman, and that the County Inspector has furnished the names of the constables to the Town Commissioners, may I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will not see the necessity of granting this inquiry?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; the fact he has stated is a ground for not granting the inquiry he asks for. The names of the policemen are known, and if they have broken the law, they can be proceeded against in the ordinary course.

MR. SEGRAVE.

DR. FITZGERALD (Longford, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if Mr. O'Neal Segrave has been dismissed from the office of Resident Magistrate in Ireland; if so, what was the date of dismissal, and up to what date was his salary paid him; and, if he will state to the House the number of cases under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act in which Mr. O'Neal Segrave has adjudicated, the number of persons who have been convicted before him for offences under that Act, and the length of the sentences respectively accorded in those cases?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. O'Neal Segrave was not dismissed from the office of Resident Magistrate. His resignation was accepted. It took effect from March 20 last, up to which date inclusive his salary was paid. As already stated, in reply to a question put by the hon. Member for South Donegal on the 26th March, it would be contrary to precedent to lay upon the Table a list of persons convicted before any particular magistrate or magistrates, and, as I then pointed out, in no instance did Mr. Segrave alone convict any persons in Court, constituted under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, such Courts necessarily consisting of two Resident Magistrates, Mr. Seagrave, when acting, being always the Junior Member of the Court, as he was merely a Temporary Resident Magistrate, and not one of the Resident Magistrates declared to be legally qualified within the meaning of the Act.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask whether the result of the right hon. Gentleman's inquiries has been that the charges of fraud and embezzlement made against Captain Segrave have been held to be legally proved, and if they have been legally proved do the Government consider it proper to accept Captain Segrave's resignation instead of dismissing him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The charges have not been proved in such a sense as to require the Government to dismiss Mr. Segrave.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman lay on the Table the correspondence with the Cape Government?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will consider that point.

In reply to Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) and MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said: I do not imagine that Captain Segrave had been long enough in the Service to be entitled to a pension. I believe that Mr. Segrave was at the top of Lord Aberdeen's list as

a candidate for a Resident Magistracy. Mr. Segrave was a Roman Catholic, and of a good family in the South of Ireland, and I imagine that for that reason Lord Aberdeen contemplated appointing him a Resident Magistrate.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the fact of Mr. Segrave being placed on the list of Lord Aberdeen implied any intention whatever?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not say anything of the kind. I stated that Mr. Segrave was placed at the top of Lord Aberdeen's list and I understood, on good authority, that Lord Aberdeen contemplated his appointment.

MR. SEXTON: If Mr. Segrave was found guilty of the charges brought against him why was he not dismissed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not said that Mr. Segrave was found guilty; all I said was that the charges had not been proved in such a way as to render it necessary for the Government to dismiss him, and therefore his resignation was accepted.

MR. CLANCY: How many persons have been convicted by Captain Segrave under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887; and are any of the persons so convicted still in prison, and, if so, will the right hon. gentleman consider the advisability of immediately releasing them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already stated in answer to the question of the right hon. Member for West Belfast that I cannot give any detailed information in regard to the action of particular Magistrates under the Criminal Law Procedure Act. I am not aware whether any of the persons convicted by Captain Segrave are still in prison. I have not received information on that point.

MR. CLANCY: If the right hon. Gentleman refuses to give the names of the prisoners convicted by Captain Segrave, can he give the total number?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I cannot.

THE MINES REGULATION ACT—BURNLEY COLLIERIES.

MR. J. SPENCER BALFOUR (Burnley): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what will be the nature of the inquiry which he has decided to institute with reference to the exemptions from the Weighing Clauses of the Mines Regulation Act in the Burnley district; will the inquiry be an open one? will the miners be allowed to appear by their representatives as well as in person; and, when the inquiry will be held?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Inspector will inquire into the particular circumstances which prevail at the collieries in the Burnley district in order to ascertain whether any special conditions exist which render it expedient or otherwise to revoke the exemptions from weighing. The Inspector was last week directed to enter upon the inquiry forthwith. Any representation which the workmen may wish to make will receive the fullest consideration; and the Inspector is specially directed to ascertain for himself their views and wishes.

INDIA—FINANCE COMMITTEE'S REPORT OF DECEMBER 20, 1886.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the recommendations of the Finance Committee in their Report of 20th December, 1886, showing a gain to the Imperial Revenue of Rs. 1,28,47,200, made up of the following items, viz. (1) Gain on Provincial Contracts, Rs. 69,01,000, (2) Reductions on Provincial Expenditure, Rs. 15,71,200, (3) Economies in the Imperial and Miscellaneous Departments, Rs. 43,75,000, has been carried out either wholly or partially, and if only partially, or not at all, can he explain for what reason?

SIR J. GORST: (1) The gain on provincial contracts was reduced to Rx. 640,000 as explained in the Indian Financial Statement for 1887-8. The greater part of this saving took effect from 1st April, 1887. A portion was, for reasons explained in that statement, postponed. (2) The reductions of provincial expenditure are made up of numerous details as to which the information in the possession of the Secretary of State does not admit of a distinct answer being given. (3) Of the savings in the Imperial and Miscellaneous Departments Rx. 275,700 are in the Public Works Establishments and Rx. 64,600 in the allowances for hill stations. These subjects are still under consideration. Some of the minor savings have been effected, but the precise amount

cannot be stated without reference to India.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state how many Civil Service Writers who were appointed prior to the 12th February, 1876, are at present on the Register of the Civil Service Commission, and out of such number how many are at the present time in the employment of the Government as writers?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I understand that there are a considerable number of the writers referred to still on the Register of the Civil Service Commissioners, and that all but one are in employment as writers in Government Departments.

IRELAND — PRISON TREATMENT OF MR. CAREW, M.P.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, after Mr. Carew, M.P., at the instance of the medical member of the Irish Prisons Board, had been allowed the use of writing materials, and had availed himself of this facility to prepare a statement of his evidence to be given before the Special Commission, it was intimated to him that no statement could be delivered to his solicitor until after it had been read by the Governor of the gaol in which Mr. Carew is imprisoned; whether Mr. Carew is not to be allowed to prepare for his defence except under the supervision of the gaol official; whether a visiting justice, who saw Mr. Carew on Thursday last in Kilmainham Gaol, has reported that he found him pale, thin, haggard, subject to bad headache, his appetite practically gone, and generally in a condition of health so extremely serious that the worst fears must be entertained in his regard; and, what steps have been or will be taken upon the Report in question?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. Carew has been liberated to-day on the ground of ill-health.

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has any information as to the case of three men—namely, Thomas J. Brown, Maurice Collins, and Cornelius M'Auliffe, of Meelin, county Cork, who were sentenced at Newmarket Petty Sessions, under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act, to six months' imprisonment, each with hard labour, for attending a meeting of the suppressed National League in the district; are these men still imprisoned in Cork Gaol; is it a fact that, on the same day, Father Kennedy and 12 other persons were sentenced by the same Bench for a similar offence to three months' imprisonment each; were Father Kennedy and these 12 co-defendants included in the charge on which Messrs. Brown, Collins, and M'Auliffe were convicted; why was such a heavy sentence inflicted on these three men for a similar offence to that committed by the others, in view of the fact that the others had committed it on two occasions; and whether, 13 of the prisoners being now at liberty, the Lord Lieutenant would see his way to order the release of Brown, Collins, and M'Auliffe?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The three prisoners named in the first paragraph of the question are, I understand, still in Cork Prison. It would not be competent for me to review the grounds upon which decisions in Courts of First Instance are come to. In the case in question it was open to the defendants, if they considered it advisable, to appeal.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Was there not a case tried in November in Dublin, in which Chief Justice Pallas said there was not sufficient evidence to justify a conviction. Although the majority of the Judges were of a different opinion, ought not the expression of so strong an opinion be sufficient to justify the exerise of the clemency of the Crown?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask the hon. Member to give notice of that question.

INDIA—HOURS OF FACTORY LABOUR IN NATIVE STATES.

MR. CAINE (Barrow): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if he is aware that in Mysore and other Native States, cotton and other factories have been established in which the *employés* work longer hours even than in factories in British India; and, if the Indian Government intends to use such pressure with the Native Governments, to induce

them to assimilate their factory legislation to that of British India, as has already been used with regard to the Excise Laws?

SIR J. GORST: The Secretary of State is aware of the existence of the factories mentioned in the question, but he has no official information as to the hours of labour in them. He sees no reason at present for the Government of India putting such pressure on the Native Governments as is suggested by the hon. Member.

SPIRITS IN SUDDER DISTILLERIES.

MR. CAINE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing the actual number of gallons of spirits issued from Sudder distilleries in those parts of India where the Sudder system exists, with the number and capacity of out-stills in districts where the system is mixed, for each year from 1877 to the latest Returns available?

SIR J. GORST: I will inquire from the Government of India how far it will be possible to obtain the Return asked for by the hon. Member.

LOCAL TAXATION LICENSES.

MR. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydfil) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether the proceeds of the duties collected by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue on local taxation licenses in one administrative county from persons residing and using the subjects of taxation in another county will be handed over to the county in which the person resides, or to that of the county in which the duties are collected?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am informed by the Inland Revenue Commissioners that the licenses will be appropriated to the county where they are taken out.

NAVAL CONRACTS.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what steps he proposes to take in order to provide that the work given out to contract under the new naval programme shall be fairly divided among the building yards on the Thames, the Clyde, the Tyne, and at Liverpool and Barrow, respectively?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD, Lancashire, S.W., Ormskirk): All firms, wherever located in the United Kingdom, possessing plant, *personnel*, and experience suitable for executing work for the Navy will be invited to tender. The offers deemed most desirable will be accepted.

IRELAND—LAND COURT CASES.

MR. LEAHY (Kildare, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that there are several cases in the district of Naas, without being heard in the Land Court for over two years; and, if he will say when the Commissioners will sit in that town for the purpose of disposing of them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that the oldest outstanding applications in Naas Union were received on the 28th of September, 1887, except a few of earlier date which stand adjourned for cause. A Sub-Commission will commence its sittings for the county Kildare next July, and will take up each district in its turn. Every endeavour is being made by the Land Commissioners to dispose of outstanding cases.

THE WELSH SUNDAY CLOSING COMMISSION.

SIR JOHN PULESTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has now completed the organization of the Royal Commission on Sunday Closing in Wales; and, if so, whether he can give the names of those appointed?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have recommended to Her Majesty the following persons to serve on the Commission to inquire into the Welsh Sunday Closing Act:—Lord Balfour of Burleigh (Chairman), the Right Hon. J. T. Hibbert, Lord Emlyn, Mr. Horatio Lloyd (County Court Judge in North Wales), and Sir Richard Harington (Chairman of Quarter Sessions in Herefordshire).

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Will the text of the instructions to the Commissioners shortly be made known?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir, shortly.

MR. G. O. MORGAN (Denbighshire): Will the inquiry be an open one?

MR. MATTHEWS: Neither the public nor the Press can claim to appear, as a right, at the sittings of a Commission appointed by Her Majesty.

THE EDUCATION CODE, 1889.

MR. HUBBARD (Buckinghamshire, N.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, whether, in view of the anxiety felt by school managers in North Bucks (and already communicated to him) as to the possible application of paragraph 85 of the Revised Code 1889 to existing schools, he could now explain the intentions of the Education Department?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): The Code will state that schools already constructed shall not be required to conform to the building rules of the Department, and in the case of schools which have been passed by the Department for a certain number of children the arrangement already made shall not be disturbed, and, moreover, that in the case of any existing school now receiving an annual grant there shall be no interference so far as space is concerned if there is sitting room for the children attending such school. As much misunderstanding seems to have arisen as to the possible operation of the new Code, my Lords propose that the old and new Codes should run concurrently, and the choice of either of them should be at the option of the managers, for the next year commencing from August next. This course is in accordance with the precedent adopted with regard to the Scotch Code 1873. A Minute shall be laid upon the Table of the House to carry this into effect.

MR. MUNDELLA: May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether there will be an opportunity for discussing the Code before the time expires when it will become law? The right hon. Gentleman suggested on a former occasion that it should be discussed on the Estimates but that would be quite impossible, because nothing could be moved on the Estimates; except a reduction of the Vote, whereas the only way of dealing with the matters is by moving an Address.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I think I have already assured the House and the right hon. Gentleman that the Code will certainly not come into operation until a full opportunity has been afforded for its discussion. I think hon. Members will recognize that it will be convenient to discuss the Code simultaneously with the Estimates, and I hope an opportunity for both discussions will be found before the end of June.

MR. MUNDELLA: I wish to know whether there will be one discussion on the Estimates and another on the Code? On the Estimates it will not be possible to move an Address.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I will take care that the House should have an opportunity of expressing its opinion on the Code; but the House will recognize the desirableness of having a complete education debate on the occasion to which the right hon. Gentleman refers.

MR. PICTON: Arising out of the answer of the Vice President, do I rightly understand him to say that the Education Department have determined that existing arrangements shall not be disturbed, but that in schools already in existence it will be sufficient to provide 8 square feet of space for each child for ever, and that those children now attending the schools are to be suffocated while other children are provided with purer air?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: The statement of the hon. Member is a somewhat highly coloured one. My answer referred to a number of cases where the Department has laid down the accommodation which the children shall have. The Department at the same time will pay due attention to cases of overcrowding wherever they occur.

IRELAND—COMMITTEE ON PRISON TREATMENT.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what steps have been taken by the Committee on Prison Treatment to inform persons desirous of giving evidence when and where they may be examined?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Prisons Committee propose to inquire whether Mr. W. O'Brien or Mr. Harrington de-

sire to give evidence, and, if so, to hear them before they leave this country; and they request me to state that if any other persons wish to give evidence they should communicate with the Secretary of the Committee, Major Griffiths, at the Home Office, Whitehall, who will make the necessary arrangements.

MR. SEXTON: Will there be any *viva voce* examination?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I imagine that that is a matter for the discretion of the Prisons Committee, upon which they have not given me any information.

MR. FLYNN: What opportunity will be afforded to persons in prison of given evidence before the Committee, seeing that they may not know of its existence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman appears to mistake the functions of the Committee. The functions of the Committee are not to go about collecting evidence, but to make up their mind on a certain question which has been put to them. To do that they have full power to ask witnesses to come before them and give evidence.

FATHER M'FADDEN.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how long the Attorney General for Ireland has had the Papers in the case of Father M'Fadden before him; and what is his decision upon the case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Attorney General has decided to change the venue in the case of Father M'Fadden and the other defendants not on bail to the Queen's County, and to have them tried there at the next Assizes.

MR. SEXTON: The point of my question is, what charge will Father M'Fadden be tried upon?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not able to answer that question.

BOUNTY-FED SUGAR.

Mr. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to a telegram published in the *Standard* on the 17th inst., from Vienna, reporting the proceedings of the Austro-Hungarian Sugar Congress at Trieste last week, in which it was stated that the condition of the bounty-fed sugar industry in that country was most flourishing, and the output of the present season was all sold, and 1,000,000 cwt. of next season's sugar disposed of in advance; that a Mr. Hirschberg, from London, who attended the Congress as the representative of the International Sugar Trust, proposed to limit the production in bounty giving countries in order to keep up the price; that his motion was lost, as the Austrian manufacturers hope to keep up the high prices without any such restriction; that in the debate in the Congress it was asserted that the advance in the price of sugar is chiefly due to the breakdown of the cane sugar competition, and that the producers hope to maintain the higher prices if the Sugar Convention fails; and, whether in view of the admitted fact that the present high price of sugar is largely attributable to the decrease of our cane sugar supply through the action of the bounty system, Her Majesty's Government will use their best endeavours to maintain the Convention, which is signed by seven out of eight of the great European bounty giving Powers?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: My attention has been called to the telegram in question, and although I have not seen the actual Report of the meeting at which the statements were made, I have received the Report of a similar meeting of the Bohemian sugar producers. On that occasion the Vice-President said, that—

"The sole object of England in adhering to the Convention was to develop to the utmost the sugar production of her Colonies. The power of production of cane sugar in her Colonies was practically unlimited. If England, therefore, tried to abolish bounties it was solely in the interest of her sugar producing Colonies."

A resolution was then passed urging the Austro-Hungarian Government not to abolish bounties. At the same meeting the Mr. Hirschberg, alluded to in my hon. Friend's question, made a proposal similar to the one reported in the telegram referred to, stating that he was acting on behalf of a powerful Sugar Syndicate, which he said would, with the "help of the Cobdenites in the English Parliament, throw out the Bill for the abolition of sugar bounties." Her Majesty's Government is fully alive to the great importance of maintaining the Convention signed by seven out of the

eight great bounty giving Powers and accepted in principle by the eighth.

THE BRANDON CASE.

MR. FRANCIS STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Deparment whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the circumstances of the Brandon case; whether, having regard to the provisions of the Poisoned Flesh Prohibition Act (27 and 28 Vic. cap. 115, sec. 2), and to the importance which the subject derives from the fact that loss of human life was involved, he will consult his legal advisers as to the desirability of ordering a prosecution to be instituted; and, whether, if his legal advisers are of opinion that the Section does not apply to poisoned eggs, he will undertake, in view of the numerous evasions of the spirit of the Act, to bring in an amending Bill to extend the prohibition to all animal substances, as well as to flesh or meat?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Chief Constable of Suffolk that by his direction an information has been laid under the 2nd Section of the Poisoned Flesh Prohibition Act against the gamekeeper who laid down poisoned eggs, and a summons has been granted, which is returnable at Brandon on the 13th of June next.

INLAND REVENUE COLLECTIONS.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what number of Inland Revenue collections and districts are vacant, and on what grounds are such vacancies not filled up?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): There is no Inland Revenue collection vacant at present, but there are four vacancies in districts. The qualifications of candidates for these vacancies are now being inquired into.

IRELAND—THE POLICE AND EVICTED FARMS.

DR. KENNY (Cork, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware Patrick Donovan, of Castleventry, Rosscarberry, county Cork, was recently evicted from his farm; that since Donovan's eviction the farm has been in charge of an emergency man guarded by two policemen; that on the morning of Tuesday, the 2nd instant, the emergency man in charge left Donovan's farm with his police guard; that the latter returned that evening without the emergency man, or any substitute for him, and took sole charge of farm till the night of Thursday, the 4th instant, when they were relieved by two other policemen, who then remained in sole charge till the night of Friday the 5th instant, when an emergency man, guarded as before by two policemen, was again placed in charge of the farm; whether it is the custom to allow policemen to take sole charge of evicted farms as in this case; and whether he will inquire into the matter; and, if he finds the facts are as above stated, he will give directions that policemen shall not in future be so employed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that after the constable left they received a telegram stating that another would be at once sent to take his place. The police did not remain to take charge of the evicted farm, but to preserve a considerable amount of public property which was at the protection-post there established.

EVICTIONS ON THE PONSONBY ESTATE.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it is true that a force of 100 police constables and an equal number of soldiers was employed in the eviction of William Forrest and Edmond Lynch, tenants on the Ponsonby estate, on the 8th instant; what was the cost of the operation; whether it is a fact that at the very time of the eviction, or immediately before, negotiations were being carried on between the landlord and the tenants on the estate for the purchase of their holdings by the latter, but were broken off owing to the interference of a London syndicate; whether he is aware that Mr. Horace Townsend, the agent of the hon. Member for South Huntingdon, declared that it was the intention of this syndicate to clear the tenants off this property; whether 37 tenants, or thereabouts, remain to be evicted; whether they have made several efforts to settle with the landlord on the best terms they can

honestly offer; whether the Forces of the Crown will be placed at the disposal of the London syndicate to evict tenants who are anxious and willing to purchase; and whether he can give any estimate of the cost of such an operation?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the facts are substantially as stated in the first paragraph, but that the date was the 7th, not 8th inst. The cost in regard to the police was—for extra pay, £22; and for travelling expenses, £34. About three weeks before the evictions the landlord addressed a circular to the tenants informing them that he had made arrangements for the sale of the estate, and offering them on behalf of the purchasers terms of settlement either as tenants, or that they should purchase their holdings under Lord Ashbourne's Act. The declaration attributed to Mr. Townsend can hardly be quite accurate, seeing that, as a matter of fact, the purchasers appeared desirous of retaining the tenants in offering them terms of settlement. The tenants do not seem to have honestly made any effort to settle. On the contrary, they ignored the overtures made to them by the former landlord on behalf of the purchasers.

MR. PICTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman speaking from knowledge supplied to him of the actual facts of the case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not believe there is any ground for stating that Mr. Townsend did say so, and if he did, it is perfectly clear, from the facts of the case, that he was incorrect.

MR. FLYNN: Upon what ground does the right hon. Gentleman say that the tenants made no effort to come to a settlement, when, as a matter of fact, they were on the point of settlement when the negotiations were interrupted?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The terms offered by the landlord were extremely liberal terms. The tenants ignored them, and I presume, therefore, that there was no real desire to come to a settlement.

MILITIAMEN AND THE REGISTRATION ACTS.

MR. KENYON (Denbigh District): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether his attention has been called to the hardship inflicted on Militiamen under the Registration Acts, who are summoned to train in a district other than their headquarters; and whether he is aware that the effect of their compulsory absence is to render them liable to have their names expunged from the register; and, if so, what steps the Government propose to take to remedy the injustice complained of?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I am aware of the hardship inflicted upon persons in the public service by reason of their becoming disqualified, owing to their absence from home while in the performance of their duties. More than one Revising Barrister has pressed upon me the necessity of amending the law in this respect. The Occupiers' Disqualification Removal Bill, promoted by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chelsea, proposes to remove this disqualification, and Her Majesty's Government hope that an opportunity may be found for dealing with the question during the present Session.

SALARIES OF THE OFFICERS OF LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

MR. WHARTON (York, W.R., Ripon): I beg to ask the Attorney General if the provisions of "The Lunatic Asylums Act, 1853," which conferred on the Quarter Sessions Committees of Visitors of Lunatic Asylums the power of choosing and fixing the salaries of the officers of the asylums, and spending annually money for repairs and other necessary expenses not exceeding £400, apply to the Asylum Visiting Committee of the County Councils?

SIR R. WEBSTER: The question of the hon. and learned Member raises a point of considerable difficulty, but in my opinion the Visiting Committee appointed by the County Council under the Local Government Act have had transferred to them the powers of the old Visiting Committee under the Lunatic Asylums Act, 1853. I understand that the Local Government Board are carefully considering the point in connection with other questions which have arisen under the Local Government Act.

WOMEN AS COUNTY COUNCILLORS.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention had been called to the Resolution passed on Tues-

day last at the London County Council, by a majority of 48 to 22, to the effect that—

"This Council heartily approves of the principle of the Bills now before Parliament for enabling women to sit as County Councillors."

And whether, having regard to the decision in the appeal of Lady Sandhurst, and to the serious inconveniences caused by the present position of affairs both to the County Council and to the constituencies who have returned women to represent them on the Council by large majorities, Her Majesty's Government will give an early opportunity of obtaining a decision of the House on the County Councillors (Qualification of Women) Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It was not intended by the Local Government Act to give to women the right to sit on County Councils, and it was so stated more than once during the passage of the Act. The recent decision has only confirmed the view taken by the Government. The Government cannot hold out any hope of being able to give the opportunity asked for.

MR. CHANNING: Does the right hon. Gentleman object to the opinion which has been expressed by the London County Council?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not object to any statement of the London County Council.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E): May I ask if a County Council electing as an Alderman a lady not qualified to be elected invalidates *ipso facto* her election; and if this lady ceases to be an "Alderman," how is this vacancy to be filled up?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: My hon. Friend will see that that is a question of law which it is not in my power to answer.

CARRYING REVOLVERS.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government have decided on introducing an Act to regulate the carrying of revolvers?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government had last year a Bill in draft on the subject of pistols, and they have a Bill on the same subject in readiness this year. It must depend on the progress of public business whether it is possible to introduce it. I may add that the subject is not free from difficulties, and that it is not easy to frame enactments which can effectually prevent ill-disposed or reckless persons from purchasing and carrying pistols, without imposing restrictions which would be vexatious to the legitimate trade in pistols.

REVISED EDITION OF THE STATUTES.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can inform the House when the second volume of the revised edition of the Statutes will be ready, and to what period the two first volumes will extend; and whether some steps can be taken to make more widely known the fact that this revised edition of the whole of the Statutes in force is in course of publication?

*MR. JACKSON: I am informed that Vol. I. is out, and reaches to the end of Queen Anne's reign. Vol. II. has been finally corrected, and has been for some days in the hands of the printers, who promise that it shall be ready for publication in a fortnight or three weeks at latest. It carries the Acts down to 1800. The copy for Vol. III., which goes down to 1814, has been sent to the printer, but no proofs have yet been sent out. Vol. I. and II. will both be sold at 7s. 6d. per vol., a very great reduction on the price of the first edition. As to making the fact of publication more widely known, I have communicated with the Stationery Office, who will, if they see it possible, do so. Probably the fact of the hon. Member's question will do something to call attention to the subject.

THE NAVAL MANŒUVRES.

ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the approaching extensive Naval Manœuvres, he has made arrangements for an adequate supply of trained signalmen at the coastguard stations round the coast, so that Her Majesty's ships may be able to communicate with them by night as well as by day; and whether he has taken any steps to arrange for a system of night signalling between our men of war and British ships of the Mercantile Marine, there being at pre-

sent no means of communicating by night or during fog?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Arrangements have been made for an adequate supply of trained signalmen at certain selected signal stations round the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland with which Her Majesty's ships will be able to communicate during the manœuvres by night as well as by day. With regard to the second part of the question, the matter is not one in which the Admiralty would take the initiative. They would be quite ready to consider any proposals put forward by the Board of Trade, but it is understood that the Mercantile Marine are of the opinion that the necessity of a general system of night and day signalling has not been sufficiently established to warrant its adoption.

THE COASTGUARD.

MR. BOND (Dorset, East): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the Revenue cruisers *Frances* and *Mary* are used for conveying coastguard men and their families from one station to another; whether it is true that there is no accommodation for females in these vessels; and, whether under these circumstances he will allow travelling expenses for wives and female children of coastguard men when being thus transferred?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The Revenue cruisers named have occasionally been used for the conveyance of coastguard men and their families on short passages and on fine weather from one station to another. They have not proper accommodation for long distances, but it happened once to each cruiser that women and children were kept on board throughout the night in consequence of weather, and they were then given the captain's cabin, which had suitable accommodation. Moving men and their families by rail instead of by sailing cruisers is largely a question of expense. It is left to the discretion of the coastguard officer on the spot, if, in his opinion, a removal by cruiser would cause discomfort or inconvenience to women or children, to send them by rail, and in such cases their travelling expenses (except in cases of removal of coastguard men for misconduct) are paid for.

THE NORTH-EASTERN ARGENTINE RAILWAY COMPANY.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has had his attention called to the statements in the Berlin and English newspapers, stating that the Deutsche Bank in London has informed the German Press that the North Eastern Argentine Railway Company was floated in London, because it was impossible to have done so in Germany, but the bank only took part in financing it upon the condition that all the material for its construction should be bought in Germany; and, whether this German bank doing business in London, and, making use of its position here to advance German against English interests, pays income tax; and, if so, in what manner it is calculated, so that the British taxpayer is protected at any rate in this respect?

*MR. GOSCHEN: The bank referred to pays income tax upon all the profits made in this country, and it has done so since the agency was established in London. The income tax is charged annually upon the average profits of the three preceding years, as shown by accounts which are furnished each year to the Surveyor of Taxes.

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Penrith (Mr. J. W. Lowther) as representing the Charity Commissioners, whether an inquiry was held by the Charity Commissioners, on 3rd April, at Brailes, respecting the administration of certain charities and charity lands; whether, as a result of the inquiry, reductions were made in the rents paid by the labourers for allotments of the charity lands, in face of opposition from the trustees; whether a few days after the inquiry one of the allotment holders, who had taken an active part in the proceedings before the Inspector of the Charity Commissioners, received notice to quit his allotments in forty-one days (although the rules sanctioned by the Charity Commissioners require twelve months' notice to be given), and the allotments have since been offered for letting on 17th May; and whether the Charity Commissioners will take steps to prevent

this labourer from losing his allotments?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The inquiry referred to in the first paragraph was held as stated. It was arranged between the trustees and the labourers that the rents of the allotments on the land of Prestige's Charity should be reduced. One of the allotment holders received notice to quit for non-payment of rent, under Section 12 of the Allotment Extension Act, 1882. The twelve months' notice referred to by the hon. Member is not applicable to cases of non-payment of rent, but relates to the determination of the tenancy by either party in the ordinary course. The Charity Commissioners have no power to interfere with the ordinary course of the law in accordance with which this man's tenancy will determine at the expiration of the legal notice, but the Commissioners have informed the trustees that it is competent for them to enter into a fresh agreement with him.

INDIA—FAMINE IN GANJAM.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I wish to put a question to the Under Secretary for India in reference to the distress in Ganjam. It is stated in the *Times* that 1,000 deaths were reported at the Relief Works last week. Has any report been received from the Governor General, and if so, does it not corroborate my statement that severe distress amounting to famine prevails at Ganjam?

SIR J. GORST: The Secretary of State for India has received no information from the Governor of Madras respecting the distress in Ganjam, described in the *Times* of to-day, other than the telegram of the 3rd of May, which I have already read to the House. The Secretary of State has instructed the Governor of Madras to send a weekly telegram in future as long as the scarcity lasts.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Does the hon. Gentleman think that a proportion of 1,000 deaths out of a population of 13,000 does not show severe distress, amounting to famine?

No answer was given to this question.

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask why Vote 27, in class 2 of the Civil Service Estimates is not to be taken in its regular order; will it be restored to its proper place or is it to be indefinitely postponed?

*MR. JACKSON: In putting down the order of the day I omitted Vote 27, because my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade is unable to be in his place to-day. The hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) has given notice of an Amendment upon the Estimate, and my right hon. Friend is anxious to hear what the hon. Member has to say.

MR. HANBURY: It will be restored to its place on another day?

*MR. JACKSON: Yes.

MR. J. MORLEY: Is it convenient for the First Lord of the Treasury to inform the House what the course of public business will be between this and Whitsuntide, and when the holidays will take place?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government hope to dispose of the Naval Defence Bill, the National Debt Bill, and the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill at an early hour this evening, and then to proceed with Supply, and, if convenient, with the Report of Supply. To-morrow we shall take Supply, and on Thursday we shall proceed with the Local Government (Scotland) Bills, and go on with them from day to day until they have been read a second time. It has been suggested that the Whitsuntide holidays should begin after the Evening Sitting on Tuesday, the 4th of June, and that the House should reassemble on Thursday, the 13th of June. At the Evening Sitting on the 4th of June, the subject of discussion will be the resolution of my right hon. Friend the Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), relating to bi-metallism.

SIR J. PULESTON: Cannot the Government extend the holidays till Monday, the 17th of June, provided the House makes good progress with business?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have already informed the House what I think it ought to accomplish before the holidays, and I cannot hold out any prospect of a longer holiday unless considerable progress is made with business.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the Drainage Bill for Ireland be introduced before Whitsuntide?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall be greatly disappointed if the Irish Railway and Drainage Bills are not introduced before the holidays. I think they can be introduced; but I have no immediate hope of taking the Land Bill, about which there is likely to be more controversy.

MR. SEXTON: Will there be any Irish Supply before Whitsuntide?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I hope it may be possible. The Votes will be taken in the order in which they stand.

IRELAND—EVICTIONS AT FALCARRAGH.

MR. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked whether the Chief Secretary for Ireland had any information about the impending evictions at Falcarragh; whether he knew the number of families about to be evicted; and whether steps had been taken for providing accommodation for the families in the workhouse?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I imagine there will be no difficulty in providing the necessary accommodation which may be required in the workhouse. As regards the evictions, my belief is that there will be evictions in all probability next Thursday unless a settlement is arrived at; but I am informed that they will only be in cases of families who it is certain can pay the rents if they are disposed to do so.

MOTION.

—o—

MERCHANT SHIPPING (COLOURS) BILL.

On Motion of Lord George Hamilton, Bill to amend the Law relating to the use of Flags in the British Merchant Service, ordered to be brought in by Lord George Hamilton, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, and Mr. Forwood.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 238.]

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

NAVAL DEFENCE BILL. (186.)

THIRD READING.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [17th May], "That the Bill be now read the third time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out the word "now," and, at the end of the Question, to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Howell.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): It seems to me that the speeches to which we listened the other night from the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division (Sir G. Trevelyan) and the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt), will do much to recall the public mind to the vast importance of this measure and the very hasty and precipitate manner in which the Government have embarked in a policy which is to envolve the expenditure of a very large sum of public money. If such speeches had been delivered from the Front Opposition Bench in the earlier stages of the Bill, it would not have been possible for the noble Lord to have boasted as he did on Friday night that the proposals of the Government had received a greater amount of popular support than any similar proposal of recent years. As a matter of fact, I should be disposed to dispute the popularity of the proposals in the country, except in one or two places where advantages have been held out in the shape of prospective contracts, and even in such districts these prospects have not always been sufficient to create enthusiasm or popularity for the proposals of the Government. Though such prospects were artfully put before the electors both of the Govan and Gorton Divisions, the voters were not disposed to show any enthusiasm for the Government proposals. But I fear that the quiescent and unquestioning attitude displayed by our Front Opposition Bench will have done very much to create the impression in the public mind that the Government have made out their case, and I am afraid the Liberal Leaders will be saddled with some amount of responsibility for the blundering policy now being pursued by Her Majesty's Government. The noble Lord (Lord G. Hamilton) complained the other night of the amount of repetition which has taken place in the course of this debate. No doubt it must be very inconvenient for a Minister to hear the strongest arguments in condemnation of his proposals coming from his own side of the House and quoted from his own public utterances. I doubt very much whether the House or the country

has yet fully realized the complete ministerial transformation that has taken place on this question. On the 2nd May, 1887, the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), speaking at the Royal Academy, and referring to the Jubilee Review that was shortly to take place at Spithead, is reported to have said :—

"I may say without boasting that on that day will be paraded a Fleet superior in strength and power to any fleet which has ever been seen by any sovereign in time of peace."

On the 19th of July following, in this House, he is reported to have said :—

"I have never said that the Navy Estimates could not be reduced, and the estimates for this year show a reduction of £800,000. I stated in my Memorandum that I was satisfied that for years to come there could be a steady reduction of expenditure and an increase of efficiency."

On the 4th of February last year, in an address to his constituents at Ealing, he is reported to have said :—

"Our relative superiority to other fleets is greater now than it has been for years past. Next year and the year after it will be greater still."

The House will remember that the main argument on which the noble Lord based his contention in favour of the introduction of this Bill was that it was necessary for the protection of British commerce that we should possess a Fleet equal in strength to the fleets of any two combined nations. On the 13th of March, 1888, he used language in this House which showed most clearly that at the present time we possess a Fleet exactly of the dimensions which he said we ought to maintain. He said :—

"The result is that whereas on March 1st, 1887, we had 171,000 tons (of armoured ships), as against 119,000 for France, 41,000 for Italy, and 26,000 for Russia, we shall have at April, 1890, 311,000 tons, as against 184,000 for France, 100,000 for Italy, and 73,000 for Russia. . . . I am well within the mark when I say that we are from 30 to 40 per cent above the next most powerful naval power."

Therefore, on the noble Lord's own showing, we shall in 1890 be possessed of as great a tonnage of armoured ships almost as the three greatest naval Powers of Europe. Lord Elphinstone, speaking in the other House last year, is reported to have said that the present rate of construction was such that we were turning out two ships to one of any foreign Power. Is the noble Lord prepared to say that Lord Elphinstone, when he uttered those words, spoke correctly? [Lord G. HAMILTON was understood to indicate assent]. I am glad to have the assent of the noble Lord to that statement. Under such circumstances, why do the Government ask Parliament for additional money, and attempt to bind Parliament for a successive number of years? The noble Lord said on Friday morning that in the event of war it would be impossible to make the necessary preparations on the spur of the moment. It seems to me that would be a very good argument if Parliament had hitherto refused to grant the necessary money for the purpose of strengthening the Navy. But, during the last ten years, Parliament has granted a sum of over £42,000,000 for the purpose of strengthening our naval defences. The House and the country are entitled to know what has led to the change of front on the part of the noble Lord. Parliament has not to my knowledge received any satisfactory answer to the question, and I think we are entitled to one. I do not say it is an unworthy thing for a man, when he sees that he has been in error, to frankly admit his error and to change his opinion. But I think we are entitled to know, after the repeated utterances we have had from the noble Lord as to the satisfactory and sufficient strength of the Navy, why he has seen fit to change his opinion, and to make such an extravagant demand upon the public purse as this. I think the country is also entitled to know what Department it is intended to trust the expenditure of this money to. Is it intended to entrust the unreformed Department of the Admiralty with it? I was surprised to observe the other day that even hon. and gallant Gentlemen opposite are not yet satisfied with the administration of the Admiralty Department. I saw it stated in the *Standard* the other day that a number of gentlemen, led by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford), intend to raise this question on the Navy Vote, and even the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. A. B. Forwood) has complained about the wastefulness of the Admiralty Department. Speaking at Skelmersdale, the hon. Member said :—

"When he saw how matters were conducted there [at the Admiralty] and how money was expended, not to say wasted, a feeling of hopelessness, approaching sometimes to helplessness, came over him."

When the Secretary to the Admiralty, with his knowledge of business, and how great and important businesses should be conducted, goes to the Admiralty, he is so appalled by the state of confusion and chaos he finds that a feeling of hopelessness, if not of helplessness, comes over him. And yet it is to this unreformed Department that the spending of this large sum of money is to be entrusted. Now, I regard the policy underlying this Bill as bad in the extreme, yea, as positively mischievous, and one to which I trust the working classes of this country will never for one moment lend their sympathy or support. The hon. and gallant Admiral the Member for Eastbourne (Admiral Field) made some reference on Friday night to the inheritance which he said the Conservatives succeeded to from their Liberal predecessors in 1842. I think he spoke somewhat scornfully of that inheritance. I happen to have by me an extract from a speech of a statesman whose name is sacred in the memory of the working classes of this country, a statesman whose authority, I think, will be admitted even by the hon. and gallant Gentleman. I have here a statement made by Sir Robert Peel on the 27th August, 1841, which, even now, completely represents the feelings of the working classes on this subject. When he was at the head of a large Conservative majority what were his opinions with reference to the inheritance to which the Conservatives succeeded? He said, in reply to the wirepullers who were then working the oracle, as they are working it now—he said, in reply to the gentlemen described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt), the other night—as sweet little cherubs who sit up aloft:—

"Is not the time come when the powerful countries of Europe should reduce those military armaments which they have so sedulously raised? Is not the time come when they should be prepared to declare that there is no use in such overgrown establishments? What is the advantage of one Power greatly increasing its Army and Navy? Does it not see that other Powers will follow its example? The consequence of this must be, that no increase of relative strength will accrue to any one Power; but there must be a universal consumption of the resources of every country in military preparations. They are, in fact, depriving peace of half its advantages, and anticipating the energies of war whenever they may be required."

Sir Robert Peel went on to indicate a policy which the working classes now most earnestly implore the Government to carry out. He said:—

"The true interest of Europe is to come to some one common accord so as to enable every country to reduce those military armaments which belong to a state of war rather than of peace. I do wish that the Councils of every country (or that the public voice and mind, if the Councils did not) would willingly propagate such a doctrine."

Such is the policy which the working classes earnestly entreat you to support. The present time, too, is opportune for the adoption of such a policy, because you have repeatedly assured Parliament that our foreign relations continue to be most cordial and friendly. If you had wished to do honour to the memory of the great statesman I have referred to, you would have observed the course he lays down in the words I have quoted. Had you done so you would have earned the lasting gratitude of the working classes of this country. Believing, therefore, that the policy which underlies the proposal you have laid before Parliament is both mischievous and wasteful, I shall vote for the rejection of the Bill.

*ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I rise solely for the purpose of giving the House the exact words of Mr. Cobden, with reference to expenditure on the Navy, as he has been put in evidence and misquoted several times by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and his words carry great weight in the country. I think the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fenwick), who has just quoted the words of a revered statesman, will admit that Mr. Cobden is as sound an authority as Sir Robert Peel. At any rate, during the time which elapsed between the expression of the two opinions, Gentlemen opposite had ample opportunity of carrying out the policy they are now urging upon us, as they boast of having been in power for two-thirds of the last 50 years. When, in 1884, Sir Thomas Brassey proposed to spend £5,000,000 on the Navy, why did they not advocate the peace policy? Why did not the hon. Gentleman the

Member for Cardiff (Sir E. Reed) go in at that time for the criticism of the *Admiral* and *Mersey* class of vessels? But, as I have said, I wish to correct the statement as to Mr. Cobden's opinion. The other night the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) told us that Mr. Cobden did say he would spend £100,000,000 on the Navy, but it was to be spent if there was a necessity. Mr. Cobden said nothing about necessity; but Mr. Cobden, with that clearness for which he was so celebrated, did not leave any one in doubt as to his real meaning. Mr. Cobden said—

"If you take the Navies of the two countries for the last century you will find that when in a normal state of peace the French have had a Navy little more than half the size of that of England. If you take the expenditure, you will find that the French naval armaments had during all that period, by a sort of tacit arrangement, as I have said, spent rather more than half of what England has spent upon her Navy."

He then goes on to say—

"I would tell to the French Government, as I now tell you, that if I found that the French Government had done anything to disturb that relation which has existed pretty nearly for a century in the proportion of the French and English Navies, I should have suspected some sinister design on the part of the French Government and should have considered myself a traitor to my country if I had allowed the Government of that country, on proof of any sinister intentions, to have made use of me to mislead or hoodwink England by leading me to suppose that my instrumentality was being used for the promotion of commercial intercourse, when I had grounds to believe they were entering upon a policy of war. England has four times, at least, the amount of mercantile tonnage to protect at sea that France has, and surely that gives us a legitimate pretension to have a larger Navy than France. Besides, this country is an island; we cannot communicate with any part of the world except by sea. France, on the other hand, has a frontier upon land, by which she can communicate with the whole world. We have, I think, unfortunately for ourselves, about a hundred times the amount of territory beyond the seas to protect as colonies and dependencies that France has. France has also twice or three times as large an Army as England has. All these things give us the right to have a Navy somewhat in the proportion to the French Navy which we find to have existed, if we look back, over the past century. Nobody has disputed it."

Mr. Cobden does not live in these days, or he would not have been able to say that. "I would be the last person," Mr. Cobden goes on to say—

"who would even advocate any undue change in this proportion. On the contrary, I have said it in the House of Commons, and I repeat it to you, if the French Government showed a sinister design to increase their Navy to an equality with ours, then, after every explanation to prevent such an abusrd waste, I should vote 100 millions sterling rather than allow that Navy to be increased to a level with ours, because I should say that any attempt of that sort, without any legitimate grounds, would argue some sinister designs upon this country."

This speech was delivered at the time when Mr. Cobden had been negotiating with France a treaty which bound the two countries closer together than ever, and at a time when, certainly far more than at the present time, France had a stable Government. I have no intention of following hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite into the question of whether formerly the First Lord of the Admiralty or the Secretary for the Admiralty said something not altogether consistent with what they say now. The whole position is in no way altered since the Bill was introduced, or since the time that the hon. Gentleman the Leader—I do not know what party it is, but we will call it the simple aggravation party—proposed a direct veto of the Bill. Then he was defeated by a majority of 14, and I trust, and I believe, that at this stage the measure will have an equal number of supporters, because no hon. Member has got up and attempted to show from anything like figures that bear looking into, that this increase of the Navy is not required to raise it, not to the standard that Cobden urged it should be kept up to, a proportion of two to one; but to keep it up to a third more than any other Navy, which everybody admits is necessary for the defence of the country. All other questions are mere side issues, and in no way justify this most unusual attempt to throw it out on the Third Reading.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): The hon. and gallant Member is perfectly right in quoting Mr. Cobden; Mr. Cobden on that occasion said that if France determined to raise her Fleet to an equality with ours he would spend a hundred millions to bring our Fleet to a superiority. But the hon. and gallant Member should recollect that Mr. Cobden in his most able pamphlet on "Three Panics," published shortly afterwards, pointed out that since the beginning of the century the

porportion of the French Fleet to that of England had been as two to three, and he also pointed out that if we raised our Fleet beyond that proportion France would certainly follow and the proportion would remain the same, and so I think Mr. Cobden can be quoted in favour of an economical policy. The hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division (Mr. Fenwick) in his able Speech made a complaint of the attitude of Members on this Bench; but for myself I feel that I am not open to his reflections, for I voted againt the Second Reading of the Bill, and in the course of Committee I endeavoured to reduce the measure to somewhat more moderate proportions, but in vain. It is proposed to spend no less than ten millions in excess of what may be called the normal rate of expenditure in Dockyards on shipbuilding. I have objected to that on the ground that the effect will be to stimulate other Powers and spend in a similar proportion, and I feel absolutely certain that when the Bill is passed we shall see the French Navy increased and the relative proportions between us will remain the same. Indeed I have already seen it stated that the French Minister of Marine has declared that in consequence of the measure proposed by the Board of Admiralty in this country, he will have to propose considerable larger expenditure to the French Legislature.

LORD G. HAMILTON: Where is that stated?

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: My right hon. friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) stated to me only a few minutes ago that he had seen it in an account of the proceedings in the French Chamber. I have followed closely the statements of the noble Lord, and certainly expected that he would have made some defence for this largely increased expenditure, but I have not heard from him a single word in disproof of the many statements made last Session and the previous Session, that the Navy of England by the end of 1890 would be in excess of that of France by the proportion of three to two. The Secretary to the Admiralty has spoken frequently to the same effect, and it is somewhat curious that even pending these discussions here the Secretary to the Admiralty went to Liverpool and made a speech there in which he stated more than once that the Navy was never better prepared for war than at present, and that numerically and in character it is superior to the Navies of any two foreign nations, but he said the lessons taught by the manœuvres showed that the extent of our superiority was not so great in the minds of responsible Naval officers as to secure our supremacy so absolutely unquestionable as it ought to be if we were to maintain the advantages of our position. So it would appear that the Secretary to the Admiralty has yielded his own better judgment to the opinion of Naval officers, and it would appear from what has been said by the hon and gallant Member who sits behind him that we are called upon to make this increase in the Navy, not because it is the real belief of the contract element of the Board of Admiralty, but in consequence of the pressure brought to bear upon the Board of Naval officers. I challenge the Secretary to the Navy to get up and say that he belives this expenditure is really necessary. I am perfectly certain he cannot and will not do so. He admits that the Navy is stronger than it has ever been, that it is equal to the Navies of any two Powers, and that the additional expenditure is forced by other authorities. But the noble Lord and the Secretary to the Admiralty have frequently told us during the last two years that if we only maintain our present rate of expenditure, that is to say, that if we take into account the vessels lost, falling out of service and depreciated, allowing 40 per cent. for wastage, that expenditure in a few years would add to our superiority. When we compare the expenditure of the last two or three years with the average of the last 20 years, we find that it is almost 70 per cent in excess of the normal expenditure. For the 20 years 1864 to 1884, the annual expenditure on materials on various constructions was £1,526,000, and this year it is £2,650,000, surely a very large increase irrespective of that now proposed. I stated in the debate on the Second Reading that if you compared the naval expenditure of this country with that of France for the last 50 or 60 years, you always find the proportion of expenditure as three to two. I will only go back for 25 years, and I find that proportion maintained, and just as our expenditure increased, so in pro-

portion did that of France. During the first five years of the period, our average was £1,375,000, and that of France £880,000. In 1859 our expenditure increased to £1,895,000, and that of France to £1,112,000. From 1864 to 1888 England spent £41,700,000 upon her fleet, France £28,100,000. In 1885 there was a very large increase in our expenditure under Lord Northbrook's programme, and in the following year France increased her expenditure in exactly the same proportion. During the last three years in England the expenditure on new ships has averaged £2,730,000; in France it has been £1,800,000, still keeping the same proportion. So I assume from what has gone before, that at the end of the period for the present programme, the proportion will still remain about the same. We are going to spend in four years 8 millions for new construction, wholly irrespective of armaments, and adding that to the normal expenditure in Dockyards, will make an average annual expenditure of £4,600,000, three times the expenditure of the 20 years I referred to. I am absolutely certain that France and other Powers will follow suit, and at the end of the period our relative position will be precisely the same. Assuming that it is desirable to increase somewhat the Navy, I maintain that the mode is unwise and impolitic. It is proposed to lay down 70 vessels. But no one has condemned such a policy more than the Secretary to the Admiralty, on the ground that by laying down many vessels at the same time we should stereotype the class and the designs of one construction, and the First Lord also has on many occasions pointed out how unwise that policy would be, and up to the present he has given us no reason for changing that policy hitherto pursued. I ventured to point out in Committee how it was possible by a slight modification in the programme spreading construction over six years instead of four some of the danger would be avoided. The true policy to my mind is to lay down a certain number of vessels each year, and to build continuously but cautiously, avoiding multiplication of types. For the first time the policy of annually laying down a certain number of ships is being abandoned, and we are asked to lay down 70 vessels, of which 42 are of the same type. Two years ago the noble Lord said that he did not propose to lay down any more ironclads, and that the other Powers had come to the same conclusion. Then last year he proposed to build 24 vessels—sloops and small corvettes—which were to cost one and-a-half million. Now the country is suddenly asked to spend ten millions in building 10 ironclads of the largest class, and the reason assigned for this change is the development of quick-firing guns and new explosives, which has given a great impetus to the building of ironclads. I think it might be desirable to build a small number of ironclads, but to lay down 10 at once is certainly an unwise policy, both from the financial and the shipbuilding points of view. In three or four years better designs will be produced, and the ships built at such an enormous cost may prove to be obsolete. On this ground I endeavoured on a former occasion to restrict the threatened evils, but unfortunately without result, the noble Lord would not listen to the proposals from this Bench. My right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton, in a long speech, also urged the objections from a financial point of view. On both grounds we urged the proposals of the Government were unwise and unnecessasy, and my strong belief is that the result will be to stimulate other Powers to fresh exertions. Two or three years hence we shall find other Powers making fresh preparations to facilitate the production of vessels of a new and improved type which will render almost obsolete those we are now about to lay down in large numbers at enormous cost..

*GENERAL SIR E. B. HAMLEY (Birkenhead): One thing has been made clear during the progress of this Bill—that its opponents would be very glad to trip it up, but do not see their way to do it with safety to themselves. For it is evident that if there is one thing which the people of England just now have more at heart than another it is that the Navy should be raised to a strength adequate to the needs of the country. Therefore, hon. Members opposite began by endeavouring to do that indirectly which they did not dare to do directly, and in this spirit it was that the right hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) proposed to raise the sum asked for by throwing it on the

annual Estimates, and that question has been again raised by the mover of the present Amendment. Now, the proposal of the Government has these advantages—that it renders it certain that the money will be raised; that it will be applied to the purpose intended and to no other; and that this purpose will be accomplished in a certain definite time. For this certainty that the desire of the country will be fulfilled, hon. Members opposite wish to substitute a method by which that desire will certainly not be fulfilled, and they profess to advocate this from the highest motives because their method is more constitutional, for they appear for this occasion only as defenders of the Constitution. Now, the right hon. Member for Edinburgh knows, or if he does not, he is the only Member who does not know it—that if you wish to render a measure of this kind perfectly futile and inoperative you could not take a better way than to provide for it by the annual Estimates. And it is not too much to say that most of the shortcomings in works, stores, and equipments laid at the doors of the War Office and Admiralty have been mainly due to the system of sacrificing the provision made for them in the Estimates. I am not surprised, then, that neither the House nor the country accepted the authority of the right hon. Gentleman opposite in the matter. Indeed it was not very surprising on other grounds that his authority was not accepted. It has been the fortune of the right hon. Member for Edinburgh to fill a great number of posts in the State—I had almost said his misfortune—for if he had only filled one or two we might still have been permitted to indulge the hope that one might yet be found to which his peculiar and as yet undiscovered genius might be suited. But we can no longer cherish that expectation. The right hon. Gentleman has run through the whole gamut, and the problem is still unsolved, and therefore it is not surprising that when the right hon. Gentleman advised us to drop the Government way, which means how to do it, and adopt his way, which means how not to do it, nobody listened to him, even though he gives his advice as the champion of the Constitution. On the Second Reading there was what I may call a short comic interlude during which the hon. Gentleman the Senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) and the hon. Baronet the Member for Cumberland (Sir W. Lawson) made speeches which bore the same relation to the business of this House as a burlesque at the Strand does to the legitimate drama, and as they probably did not expect their eccentric performances to be taken seriously they need not occupy attention, and I will not further advert to them. The mover of the present Amendment and his supporters can hardly expect at this stage to defeat the Bill, but the hon. Members can still continue to express their dislike to it, and therefore they dwell on the extravagance of the measure, the waste of money—and in the supposed interests of that shadowy personage the taxpayer, in whose name so many strange doctrines are put forth, they denounce it. They appear to believe that all these millions will be so much money absolutely lost to the country, and that we shall have nothing to show for it except some unremunerative war-ships. But it must be evident that all this large sum will be spent in this country, and chiefly in the form of wages, and will therefore be expended entirely for the benefit of the working class, who, moreover, will contribute little or nothing to the taxation which is to produce or replace the money; and the Opponents of the measure are therefore opposing what would be for the benefit pure and simple of the working class—the class of which many of them claim to be specially the representatives. Whether their unlucky clients will approve of their efforts to rob them of this great benefit must appear doubtful to those hon. Members themselves when they come to think of it. Well, the hon. Member for Leicester based his opposition mainly on different grounds, on sentimental grounds—namely, on his faith in human nature. And his faith in human nature has led him to believe, among other curious things, that the fact that we have the largest commerce in the world is a good reason why we should not protect it. The hon. Member and everybody else in a community like ours ought to know that security is the very life-blood of commerce, and that for us it means security on our coasts, and security on the high seas. Other Powers have little ocean commerce to guard or to lose, while we

must be prepared to spread our efforts over an immense area to defend a great many points and trade routes against a concentrated attack on either, and this alone ought to carry conviction of the necessity for our great superiority at sea. The hon. Member's faith in human nature has also led him to believe that our Government ought to make it its business to impress on other Governments the expediency of disarmament, and that to show our sincerity we should begin by ceasing all efforts for our own defence, just as some worthy persons become total abstainers in order the better to convert their intemperate brethren. I should much like to see the appeal formulated which the hon. Member would address to foreign Governments on the subject. Does he consider what disarmament means for them—the cessation and dissolution of that vast system, naval as well as military, which absorbs so huge a share of the population and resources and intellect of the Continent. Surely the people of those States would not submit to such a burthen unless they believed it to be necessary to their safety? And how would the hon. Member propose to convince Germany that she ought to disarm in the present attitude of France? How could he convert France to his views, while she is convinced that her great neighbour cherishes the hope of completely crushing her next time? How could he induce Russia to give up her traditional policy of aggression and conquest? How could he persuade Austria and Italy to abandon their means of defence, and with them all hope of obtaining powerful allies? And while the individual powers would be thus deaf to counsel, how could he hope to prevail on all together? Every one of them knows that to disarm would mean to drop out of her place as a great Power and never to regain it. Therefore the Cabinets of Europe would turn a deaf ear even to the honeyed words of the hon. Member for Leicester, or to any Government which should make itself his mouthpiece; and few of us would wish, I should hope to see England in the position of volunteering advice which nobody listens to. Let us hope that the time may come when disarmament may become possible, probably through the action of the peoples of Europe, who will refuse any longer to continue the ruinous competition of warlike power. But it has not come yet, and till it does hon. Members who amuse themselves with devising plans for converting the Powers of Europe by talk must be content to be regarded as unpractical and even mischievous dreamers. And why do the people of England wish to see this Bill passed? It is because they feel that England should be not merely a great Naval Power, but the predominant Naval Power; and that, so long as her position as such is open to doubt, so long does she fall short of the necessities which her geographical situation and her widespread Empire impose on her. The people feel, more perhaps than their rulers feel, that England stands alone among nations in this—that she is nothing if not a sea Power, that she is encircled by the ocean, and that all her paths—paths which she must incessantly traverse—are on the deep, and her first duty, a duty fixed on her by nature herself, is to make these facts the basis of her policy, whether for peace or war. And the Government, therefore, cannot be too warmly congratulated on having recognized these facts, and on having wisely resolved to satisfy the desire of the people by raising England to its proper supremacy among the sea Powers.

MR. S. STOREY (Sunderland): We always find that when the Admirals want anything the Generals will help them, and doubtless now, as on the former occasion, the noble Lord finding that he has a Douglas and a Hotspur to back him thinks he may bid defiance to the world of Radicals in arms who represent the shadowy taxpayer. I do not hope that at this late period of the debate I can say anything new, but perhaps hon. Members will premit me to say how these proposals have struck a mind which at any rate comes fresh to the question. I first heard of the proposals, in a happier atmosphere than that of smoky London. I have not been present at the debates, I have not listened to the talk in the Lobbies, and the opinion I express may be called uninformed, but it is one I have come to upon considerations of my own. The first reports I heard in America were that the noble Lord proposed to ask for no less a sum than 21 millions for the

further enlargement of the British Navy. I must confess that so large a sum startled me. At the same time I am one of those who are always free to admit that it is the paramount duty of a Government worthy the name, and of the House of Commons, to perfect the defensive position of the country, and I think they incur a grave responsibility who set themselves to oppose well-considered and necessary—even if expensive—proposals for that end. I have noticed, however, of late years, that this doctrine has been pushed to the length of holding that upon matters of armament, patriotism demand that we should be all at one to the extent of accepting any projects that Ministers or quacks may prescribe, ignoring the higher duties of the House, to examine with lynx-eyed keenness, that the scare does not usurp the place of real danger. I was very much struck by the remarkable speech of the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt). To that speech no answer has yet been given from the Front Bench, and I hope that the Secretary to the Admiralty, or some one for him, will rise and give an answer to the House and to the country. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby is in the habit of putting things very plainly, and I should like to attempt to emphasize his position. I cannot hope to imitate the thunders of the gods, but I can put the thing in concrete English thus:—The right hon. Gentleman on Friday night proved, first, out of the mouth of the noble Lord, that in 1886 the Liberal Government handed over to the Tory Government a Fleet which was equal to the Fleets of any three other naval nations. He proved in the second place, out of the noble Lord's mouth, or by his works, that he reduced the Naval Estimates in 1887, and again in 1888, and encouraged the country to believe that there was every possibility that such a happy state of things would continue in the future. He proved in the third place from the noble Lord's statements that he came to the conclusion suddenly that some change was necessary, and some large expenditure desirable, and that that conviction sprang from the experience he got at the Autumn Manœuvres last year.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I did not say that.

MR. STOREY: I understood that to be the meaning of the noble Lord's words—and I have examined the point—or at any rate that his conviction was considerably reinforced by that experience, but there seems to be a difficulty both in and out of the House to know exactly what he did say.

LORD G. HAMILTON: Allusion had been made to a statement in my memorandum of 1887-88, and I stated that I considered that in fighting power we were superior to any other Naval Power, but I spoke with great reserve as to what protection we could give to our commerce, and I said the opinion I then held had been confirmed by the Autumn Manœuvres.

MR. STOREY: Holding that opinion why did the noble Lord permit the First Sea Lord a fortnight before to state that not more than six swift cruisers were necessary? I will not press the point, but, dealing with the most important statement of the hon. Member for Derby—as yet undenied—as to the Fleet of this country in 1886 being equal to the Fleets of any three Naval Powers—

LORD G. HAMILTON: I never said so.

MR. STOREY: Whose fault is it that we are in a worse position now, and if we are not, where is the justification for the enormous expenditure proposed? Let us suppose for the sake of argument—and I cannot suppose it otherwise—that the decision the noble Lord arrived at was right, that there ought to be an enormous and sudden increase of the Navy, I want to ask him how he should have gone about it, and perhaps the Secretary for the Admiralty will answer this point. If the increase be right, no more unbusinesslike method could be adopted by anybody. Let us suppose the existence of a firm which has large business dealings all over the world, and that it finds that rivals are stretching out their hands and taking possession of part of their field and coming into close competition. What would be the method of dealing with that difficulty on the part of any sensible business house? They would go to work quietly and make no noise about it; they would not indulge in shrieks and make flaming statements as to what they were doing,

to make their opponents more active than in the past. What has been the Government plan—the noble Lord's plan? Having hatched a sort of legislative bantam, he goes in front of the whole world and says: "Behold this bantam! when it grows to the size that I mean to have it, no possible combination of other bantams in the world will be able to beat it." This policy defeats its own ends. When the hon. Gentleman opposite mentioned France he was met by denials from the Front Bench. The right hon. Member for Derby said he saw that the energetic action of the noble Lord was going to be followed by France; that was denied. I do not know how it may be with France. I was in the extreme West of America—California—when this proposal was made, and in crossing the States I found everywhere, amongst Democrats as well as Republicans, men of position, the resolution formed and stated that America should have a larger Fleet than in the past. When I got to Washington I saw the Secretary of the Admiralty, the most powerful politician in America, and I spoke to him about that resolution. He said—

"We do intend to have a larger and stronger fleet, and you cannot complain of it in England because you are spending 21 millions extra on your own fleet."

That is exactly the effect which this dramatic method of the Government has. Your action brings about a reflex action elsewhere, and ere long the relative proportions will remain as they have been. If the noble Lord had gone about this matter quietly, aiming at securing practical results rather than dramatic effects, he might with our long purse and unrivalled powers of shipbuilding have created the state of things he desires quietly. But he acts the part of Mr. Vincent Crummels, of that infant prodigy, of whom Dickens tells it was kept upon unlimited supplies of gin so as to keep it small—a method we should like to see applied to these bloated proposals. The proposal is theatrical in another sense. I saw it was to be an expenditure of 21 millions, whilst in the Western States of America; when I got nearer home I found it had dwindled to 10, and when I got to the House I soon discovered that the noble Lord allocates seven, and proposes to ask for a blank cheque to be honoured some day for the other three. I happened to be present the other night when the hon. Member for Newcastle raised this point. The noble Lord said that if the present Government were in office it might be used for new buildings or for the reduction of the Estimates, so that three millions are to be free. I would suggest another method to the noble Lord for its use. If the virtuous Tories are in Office, I am sure they will come down in 1891 or 1892, as they have done before, and plume themselves on having the magnificent sum of three millions in hand, and, in face of a General Election, they will apply it to the reduction of taxation. I think I have shown how this Motion strikes me as unbusinesslike, and likely to defeat its own ends, but I have a far stronger objection than that, which I think is also held by many Members on this side of the House. I say the proposal as to financial methods is decidedly unconstitutional, and in connection with this point, I cannot but refer to what the gallant Admiral (Admiral Field) opposite said. With the frankness which distinguishes a sailor, but is inconvenient in politicians, he said the Government meant to put compulsion on the House of Commons. That is treason to the House of Commons, neither more nor less. If the gallant Admiral had seen the face of the noble Lord when he said that, he would have thought he had made a mistake. The noble Lord himself said that he meant to take security against the hon. Member for Derby. I am sure if the gallant Admiral goes to sea and exposes his ships to be raked fore and aft by the enemy as he has done the Government arguments to the Radical Benches, he will never rest in Westminster Abbey. Some of my friends complain that I vote with the Tories. So I do, when I think they are right. I regard some of them on the Treasury Bench as more promising disciples of Radicalism than the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian and the right hon. Member for Derby. They passed the closure, enacted perpetual coercion for Ireland, and they propose this unconstitutional method of taking away from the House of Commons the keystone of its power and the people's liberties, the right to vote each year the money for our defences. No wonder I can afford

to vote for a Conservative Government when it develops Radical propensities like these. I do not mean Radical because they are right, but in the sense of being extreme—revolutionary, I may call them. I trust there are some hon. Members opposite who realize what they are doing. If you can vote a sum of money for the Navy, spreading over several years, you can do it for the Army; if you can do it for the Army you can do it for any other service, and so you whittle away that Constitutional right of the House of Commons by which, in ancient days, we brought Kings and Lords to their knees and compelled them to obey the will of the people. What guarantee have we that either the Government or the Opposition in the future when they get the money, will, under the present system, expend it advantageously? This Bill, besides being unbusinesslike, ineffectual and unconstitutional, has one more objection that can be raised against it. What guarantee have we when those Gentlemen on that (the Ministerial) side take command in the future—nay, I will go so far as to say, when these Gentlemen on this side take command—that under such a system as the present the Bill before the House will be found to secure the ends aimed at? Why, during the comparatively short period of my life this House of Commons has provided for the Government to expend on the Navy alone a sum very nearly equal to the whole National Debt. Well, as to the money asked for by this Bill, you will get it, and, I will undertake to say, you will spend it; but I question very much whether you will produce the results you anticipate, unless the whole system of the Admiralty be altered. Unless new men be placed there, and new methods of conducting its business adopted, I see no hope of your being able to secure efficient results for the people. The noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty knows—and no one knows better—that five or seven years hence, when this money is all spent, and his mighty fleet of ships has been created, all of them that have not collided in the Channel, or that have not been sunk on the rocks of the Mediterranean, will have become as obsolete for fighting purposes as Noah's Ark; while in seven years' time there will be a new generation of nautical Oliver Twists crying out for more, and money will then be demanded alike by Generals and Admirals, and expended by the Government just as it is to-day. I thank the House for having given me this opportunity of making these few remarks, and I will close by saying that, mainly on the ground that these proposals are in their money aspect unconstitutional, and that the method is unbusinesslike and self-defeating, I condemn the scheme of the Government, and shall be glad, though at this late stage, to give my vote against it.

*Mr. FORWOOD (Ormskirk, Liverpool): I am sure there is no one in this House who will not join with me in welcoming back, after a long absence, the hon. Member for Sunderland, whose eloquent tones we have listened to in the important part he has taken in the discussions of this question. But, Sir, if I have rightly gathered what the hon. Gentleman has said, I think I am correct in saying that his opinion on this Bill has been very much founded upon what he heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) on Friday last. Although, after the eight or ten occasions on which the Bill has been discussed in this House I feel almost ashamed further to take up the time of the House, yet there are some points that have been brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, to which attention must be called. I greatly regret that the right hon. Gentleman is not in his place, because it is very inconvenient when one has to call attention to very serious observations and mistakes that have been made in a particular speech to do so in the absence of the speaker, by whom they were made. I am sure that no one who was present in the House on Friday could have failed to observe the manœuvre which was then executed by inducing my noble Friend to reply at the hour he did. Immediately my noble Friend sat down, he was followed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, and I am bound to say of that right hon. Gentleman that he adhered, if it were possible, even less scrupulously to the facts than is his wont. He gave on that occasion an additional license to his ingenuity and vivid imagination, and I very much

doubt whether that license would have been given had my noble Friend had the opportunity of reply. As it happened, in regard to that debate, my noble Friend's hands were tied behind his back, because he had not a further opportunity of replying to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman. Observations have been made from time to time in this House as to the statements which have been put forward by my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty, by my Friend the First Sea Lord (Sir Arthur Hood), and by myself, with regard to the state of the Navy. With regard to what I have had to say I may at once state I have not one single word to retract or withdraw, and I believe I am speaking quite as much for the noble Lord near me, as well as for the First Sea Lord, as I have said for myself, when I say that they also have nothing to withdraw from the public statements and evidence they have given. All that we ask is that what we have stated shall be quoted in our own words, and not garbled and made use of without the context. Furthermore, I think that the varying circumstances which do and must arise in regard to the naval policy of any Government ought to be considered in dealing with statements made two or three years ago; and I am bound to conclude that the unfair use made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby of statements, or alleged statements, on the part of the Government, has had considerable effect on the mind of the hon. Member for Sunderland who has just spoken. Now, Sir, the right. hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby attributed to my noble Friend in a speech he made at Birmingham the remark "That the late Liberal Government had left the Navy in a terribly insufficient condition;" and in order to contrast my noble Friend's present position with his past utterances, the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to state that at the Mansion House, in the year 1886, the noble Lord had stated "That the ships in commission exceeded the combined Forces of the three greatest Naval Powers in Europe," and he also said that that was my noble Friend's description of the Navy he had inherited from his predecessors. It was upon these two quotations that the whole of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was based; but I do not think he will be surprised to hear that neither statement was made by my noble Friend. What was said at Birmingham by my noble Friend was this: He was speaking in reference to certain ammunition that had not been ordered for quick firing guns by the late Government and he said: "Although the Government had ordered a large number of quick firing guns, yet they had deliberately struck out the order for the ammunition which rendered the guns efficient." Now, construed for Party purposes, these words of my noble Friend were transposed in this House to mean, that the late Liberal Government had left the Navy in a terribly insufficient condition. Well, Sir, I say that that statement, as made in this House, was perfectly unjustifiable; that it had never been made by my noble Friend, and that the words which really were used by him would bear no such interpretation. Now, I will take the other words that were said to have been used, and the contrast that was endeavoured to be drawn. What the noble Lord said at the Mansion House was that "The number of ships in commission was greater than that of any three navies"; and this was transposed by the right hon. Gentleman and put as an expression of opinion with regard to the condition of the Navy; though I dare say the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby does not know the difference between the number of ships in commission and the condition of the Navy. Then, Sir, comments were made on the evidence of an absent man—the First Sea Lord, which were even more unfair—and here I am bound to say that the right hon. Gentleman is not the only one who has not fairly quoted the evidence given by the First Sea Lord. The right hon. Gentleman in his speech on Friday stated that "The First Sea Lord was satisfied with everything on the 16th June; yet early in July we heard of this great plan for the increase of the Navy." My hon. Friend the Member for Banff (Mr. R. W. Duff) has, on a previous occasion, gone even further than this, for he said, "The First Sea Lord gave evidence to the Committee, and yet at the time he had the new scheme in his pocket." Now, Sir, when Sir Arthur Hood gave his evidence he had previously stated that no complete scheme, or plan of campaign, or whatever it may be called,

had ever been laid before the Admiralty. I am going to ask the House, in the case of Sir Arthur Hood, one of the most distinguished naval officers of the day, to allow me to quote his own words. Sir A. Hood was asked whether, in his opinion, the Navy at the present moment was fully adequate to perform its duties. His reply was:—

"I am satisfied with the relative number of battle ships on these two conditions—first, that we shall continue to build battle ships to be ready to take the place of those that become obsolete, so that by the time they become obsolete we shall have new ships ready to take their place; and, secondly, that in the event of any other Power laying down more armour-clads, we should, at the same time, lay down vessels which would be certainly more powerful and faster . . . . I do not think we have enough fast cruisers . . . . They are the most pressing requirement."

Now, I ask the House to bear in mind two important conditions which Sir Arthur Hood attached to his evidence. He said—

"I am satisfied with the Navy on two points, provided we go on building further ironclads; and, secondly, that we watch the course of other Powers."

And in regard to the second condition, I desire to give the House some information as to what has been the policy of other Powers during the last 12 or 15 months. The facts I am about to state were known before our programme was laid before the House and the public. I am dealing with the armoured vessels of the world, and I do so without in any sense desiring to draw an invidious comparison between the work being done by one Power and another. I wish to lay before the House all the information we possess before it comes to a vote. France had six armoured vessels dawdling upon the stocks up to within the last few months. They were doing their work in such a manner that the vessels would be in hand about ten years, but about the middle of last year they pushed them to completion, and they have since laid down three, if not four, certainly three more vessels. Russia also in 1888, had laid down, or was preparing to lay down, five armoured vessels, and they have one or two more under consideration. The largest is over 10,000 tons. Practically she is re-erecting her armoured Navy. I want the House to understand that this increase of Russia's Navy is not attributable to our policy. I happened to take up a journal in which was a communication from one of those enterprising creations of modern times, the interviewer who has apparently been to Russia. I read the following:—

"It is not surprising that mistaken ideas prevail as to the facts about Russia's armaments. It is stated in an English newspaper that Russia is taking steps to largely increase her Navy, in consequence of the extraordinary activity of the British Admiralty. Nothing could be further from the truth. The expansion of the Russian Navy is owing to no sudden impulse, but is the result of a carefully considered and long settled plan, but of late years, the strides towards completion have been more rapid than was contemplated in the original proposal."

We all know that within the past few months Germany has commenced a new programme, which includes 13 armoured vessels, four being heavy ironclads, and some of which are already under weigh. Italy, we know, has pushed on to completion the three ironclads she had on hand, and proposes to lay down another. We also know that Spain has four armoured vessels under construction, and plans for several others are in course of preparation. The hon. Member (Mr. Storey) has referred to the United States, which are building two armoured vessels, and have obtained authority to build three additional vessels. From the remarks of the hon. Member, the House might have been led to believe that the action of the United States had been taken subsequent to the action of Her Majesty's Government. Nothing could be further from the truth. Two vessels were laid down in the United States last year, and under the Bill, which received assent before the change of President on the 4th March last, three more were to be commenced.

MR. STOREY: The hon. Gentleman is aware that in America they are slow moving, and he had better wait two or three months, when he will find that what I have said is absolutely the fact, that in the United States they justify their action—as he will see from the debates—by the extreme action taken by this Government.

*MR. FORWOOD: I shall not be surprised at all if America goes on increasing her Navy. She has a large surplus revenue which she does not know what to do with. If she does not spend it on the

Navy or Public Works she will be obliged to reduce the duties, but the President is pledged to maintain the duties. As they must get rid of their money, they can do so in no more popular way than by spending it among the shipbuilders of the country.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Did not the First Lord of the Admiralty in his opening speech declare that there was no abnormal expenditure on the part of the Naval Powers of the Continent?

MR. FORWOOD: My noble Friend's remark was that the expenditure was ceaseless, but had not been so remarkable in the past few months. The statement I have made has simply reference to what other nations are doing at the present moment. However, our programme is for four and a-half years, and we are placing before the House the work we propose to do in each of the following five years. Now, Sir, we have every reason to expect that foreign Governments will go on with the work of constructing their navies, and the facts I have stated with regard to foreign Powers have, I think, a very important bearing upon that part of Sir Arthur Hood's evidence which I have already quoted. I come to another point of the right hon. Gentleman's speech on Friday, where he said it was all nonsense to talk about the programme being a new programme recommended by the responsible advicers of the Admiralty; it was nothing of the kind. Well, of course, that is the usually courteous way in which the right hon. Gentleman conveys his point-blank denial. I can quite understand his scepticism as to any such plan being recommended by the responsible advisers of the Admiralty, for I am bound to say the mode of conducting the business of the Admiralty in past years has been exceedingly slovenly. It is probably the first time in Naval administration that any Government has had the courage to call in responsible Naval advisers to state what they considered a sufficient number of vessels to protect the trade, commerce, and interests of this country. There has always been a feeling that their advice would lead to a large expenditure, and that it would be very troublesome in constructing a popular Naval Budget, to have obtained the counsel of professional and responsible advisers beforehand as to what was necessery for the security of the country. I admit that it was a bold step to take. The relative superiority between nations as regards their navies depends not only on numbers, but on the position their opponents may occupy. Of course, if it came merely to a question of Fleets meeting in the open sea it would be a simple matter to state the number of vessels that would be required to cope with another certain number of vessels. But it is a very different matter when we have objective points to defend, as well as the duty of protecting our own coasts. I believe that those who wish to see this country strong and properly protected hold that the right position for us to occupy is to have regard not only to the force that can be mustered by any two possible antagonists in positions most favourable to them, and that we must have regard to our having a force placed in the most difficult position as regards the interests of this country. This was the proposition placed before the naval advisers of the Board. That proposition they answered, and on that answer our scheme is based. What they recommend is supported by the evidence which the Naval Manœuvres afforded. I venture to say to this House that with such a knowledge as we possess, and with such an opinion from our responsible officers, we should have been untrue to the trust reposed in us for the protection of the Empire had we not laid before the House this plan, leaving to the House the responsibility of accepting or rejecting it. We are told that our scheme is to be opposed on the Third Reading, and a Division is to be taken; but, at any rate, we shall not have against us the vote of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs, who, when challenged by me, said that, although it would be difficult for him to vote with us, yet he was going to support the proposition of the Government. The hon. Member for Sunderland and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford twitted us with the unbusinesslike manner in which we are carrying out our scheme, and said that no business man, no private firm, would lay down vessels in the way we propose. I quite admit that the right policy, and the best policy, in shipbuilding, whether by private companies or by the Government, is to lay down a continuous amount of tonnage, so that you may not have to put down a

large number one year, and a small number another. What might be prudent on the part of a private individual might be very imprudent on the part of the Government, in whose case time is the most important element. These vessels must be completed within the time stated in the Bill, and every care has been taken to have the designs completely matured and the amount of armament fixed before any steps are taken to have the vessels constructed. As the hon. Member for Sunderland has raised a question as to the constitutional character of the finance and there appears to be some confusion in the matter as to the three millions of money, I will again explain that the Bill provides for an expenditure of 10 millions of money on contract work and 11½ millions on work to be done in the dockyards, including armaments, and the three millions have nothing whatever to do with any amount in the Bill. It is simply a surplus sum of money—if the normal rate of expenditure is maintained—available to go on with new construction as present ships fall out of the dockyards, and so to prevent the discharge of men at the dockyards. I think the House will admit that if the Government lay down a programme to be executed within a given time, unless they wish to see the dockyards shut up, they must provide for further expenditure on other work to follow. With regard to the constitutional character of our finance, all I can say is that the £10,000,000 of money are going in contracts, and whether they are in the Bill or not, being contracts it can make no difference in the control of this House over the money. The money for dockyard-built ships will come before the House from year to year to be voted; but having the scheme embodied in the Bill, if any Government desired for popularity's sake to reduce the Estimates, they would have to explain that the reduction meant a reduction in the shipbuilding which the House had already ordered, and was not merely a sum to be cut off the Estimate without any explanation at all. I believe the Vote on the Second Reading showed that the Bill commends itself to the common sense of the majority of the House, and I trust that on the Third Reading there be sufficient unanimity to show that the protection of the Empire is a matter in respect of which none will seek to gain a Party advantage.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): The speech of the hon. and gallant General opposite (Sir E. Hamley) has given me an additional reason for desiring to speak this afternoon. He seemed to think that some of us are putting ourselves out of touch with our constituents. Now, I believe that we—the opponents of the Bill—will have no difficulty whatever in justifying ourselves before our constituents. So far as I can ascertain, we are just in the same position now as we were when the Bill was first brought in. There has been no clear Ministerial statement giving a distinct reason why there should be this extraordinary expenditure on the Navy. Hon. Gentlemen opposite only regard it as a sop in the pan, and tell us that something more will be required to make the Navy perfect. Even the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford) does not like the Bill, because the Government have not submitted a thoroughly complete scheme, and one that will be sufficient for the country once for all. I have risen to take part in the debate, however, chiefly on account of the extraordinary way in which the name of an illustrious statesman has been attempted to be utilized by hon. Gentlemen opposite. I was astonished to be told on Friday by a gallant Admiral, who is one of the warm supporters of the Government, to study Richard Cobden. Now, I think that I studied Richard Cobden before the gallant Admiral made up his mind to favour the country with a specimen of his ability in the political arena. When I was quite a youth Richard Cobden was one of the men I followed most assiduously. When I heard him quoted the other night, I asked myself, "What has become of the author of 'The Three Panics?'" I wonder whether the gallant Admiral has ever read "The Three Panics" carefully and assiduously? The whole of Richard Cobden's life was spent in attacking with vigour the panics which were repeatedly being got up. He attacked—first, the panic of 1847-48; next, the panic of 1851-52 and 1853; and, lastly, the panic of 1859-60 and '61. Richard Cobden has over and over again been brought into court by

hon. Members on the other side of the House as a witness in favour of the scheme of the Government. Let me direct attention to Mr. Cobden's speech in this House in 1859 before the Commercial Treaty was signed. Was it a speech in favour of an extensive expenditure on the part of the Admiralty beyond the ordinary expenditure? Not at all. It was a powerful and trenchant speech against a similar panic to that which we are attacking now, and it was made in opposition to one of these extraordinary attempts to extract a large sum of money from the country without any particular object. On the 29th of July, 1859, Richard Cobden said:—

"We have been asked to vote this year for the purposes of the Navy no less than £26,000,000 sterling, or twice the amount voted for a similar object when I first entered the House. We are called upon this year to vote three times as much for the Navy as was the case in 1835, when the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel were at the head of affairs."

Is that a speech in favour of the argument of hon. Gentlemen opposite? We have had in the course of this debate inuendos against the conduct of the French, Russian, and other European Governments, and we are given to understand that it is necessary to make this expenditure because something horrible is going to happen owing to the conduct of these Governments. Mr. Cobden, in the speech I am quoting, went on to say:—

"While the Courts of these countries have been holding friendly intercourse, the Governments at the same time have been preparing for an outbreak of war, and have never shown the slightest confidence in each other. This is a degrading policy in the sight of the world. I say that we ought to have as large a Navy in England as any other country possesses. If I saw a disposition on the part of France to have as large a Navy as England——"

ADMIRAL MAYNE: The speech which I quoted was one delivered by Mr. Cobden at Rochdale.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: This is the only speech which I have, and it was delivered in this House. Mr. Cobden went on to say—

"If I saw a disposition on the part of France to have as large a Navy as England, and no inclination to yield to the offer of an explanation, I should suspect France of having a sinister purpose in her armaments, and if it came to a question of rivalry after the offer of explanation had been made, I would as cheerfully vote £100,000,000 sterling as I would vote £5,000,000 under the present system."

Speaking again as to what might be necessary under certain circumstances, Mr. Cobden said—

"I would submit to these evils when they are necessary; but for Heaven's sake do not impose them on the people longer than you can! With reason, argument, and justice remove them from among them."

In the present instance the Government have not shown the paramount importance of expending this money. On the contrary, we are already overburdened with a struggling population, and we say, "Do not do this until it is an absolute necessity, and then, when you can show that there is a necessity, possibly we shall be as ready as you are to vote the money." Mr. Cobden told us in "The Three Panics" that—

"The effect produced by the invasion panic in England was very dissimilar upon different classes in France. Statesmen and men of education and experience, did not give the British Government credit for sincerity when it made the alleged naval armaments of France the plea for extraordinary warlike preparations. Their opinion could not be better expressed than in the words of M. Ducos, who, when writing privately to one of his colleagues during the former panic, observed that 'the English Cabinet may possibly not be very much distressed by these imaginary terrors (as we have sometimes seen among ourselves), inasmuch as they enable them to swell their Budget, and serve to strengthen a somewhat uncertain majority in Parliament.'"

The Government want a huge sum of money to spend in the Dockyards, and we suspect that their object is to squander it before the next Election. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] I have a perfect right to look for an object. It is not necessary that I should refer further to Mr. Cobden; but I could stand here all day and pelt hon. Members opposite with quotations from his speeches. Before I sit down let me give another quotation—this time from the late Joseph Hume, who on one occasion said—

"Our present panics are not due, as in times past, to old women, but to having too many clubs about London containing so many half-pay officers, with nothing to do but to look after themselves and their friends. These are the men who write to the newspapers, and are anxious to bring grist to the mill somehow or other."

There were, therefore, in those days persons who held very much the opinion which we hold now. It is the old rivalry and the old attempt to best one another, leaving the mass of the toilers of the country to pay the cost. But there are those who believe that the strength of an Empire does not consist in the amount of money spent year

by year in taxation, but upon the condition in which the masses of the people are. An Empire existing under good conditions, with a free and prosperous people, should the emergency arise, however strongly they may be imbued with high and noble peace principles, will know how to meet it, and would go forth to encounter any foe who might care to enter the field against them. I have made these remarks by way of protest against the policy of the Government, and I shall go into the Lobby in support of the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green as one of the legitimate heirs of Richard Cobden. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] I should like to know how long hon. Gentlemen opposite have posed as the heirs of Richard Cobden, and have been proud of his deeds. I have yet to learn that they are admirers of his grand policy of Free Trade and non-intervention. It is certainly in his spirit that we on this side of the House shall go into the Lobby to vote against the proposals of the Government.

*LORD C. BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): I should not have intervened in this debate but for the remarks of the Secretary of the Admiralty. It all shows how careful we ought to be in these matters on both sides of the House to bury all questions of Party when we are considering the defence of the country. I myself have always carefully avoided saying what occurred when other Governments were in power, and to put my views as clearly as possible before the House without touching sore places. Now, my noble Friend at Birmingham certainly did say something which irritated some people.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I said nothing at Birmingham which I have not said in this House over and over again.

*LORD C. BERESFORD: My noble Friend has corrected me. Then he has certainly been misunderstood, but the debate, in my opinion, has been prolonged in consequence of what he did say. I think that all questions of Party should be barred on an occasion like this when we are discussing the defences of the country. I do not blame the Front Bench for changing its mind and for making out black is white if they will only admit that they have been misinformed, but they have adopted the political way of getting out of the difficulty. I think it is much better to be broad and honest, and if they have made a mistake say so. Depend upon it, the conduct of my late colleagues and the Government have done more to stop this Bill passing quickly than anything else. I object to their making out that I can neither read nor write, hear nor see. The Secretary of the Admiralty spoke of altered circumstances. I entirely disagree with him. The circumstances have not altered in the least. The proposals which I made on the 13th of December were almost identical with the proposals now made by the Government, but I was answered by the Government and told that I was altogether wrong, and that there was no necessity for them. I want to know what vessels Russia and France and Italy have laid down above and beyond that Return. I deny that there are any, and the Secretary of the Admiralty must know it.

*MR. FORWOOD: What Return is the noble Lord referring to? The facts I gave were from the Return made this year.

*LORD C. BERESFORD: The hon. Member stated that France, Italy, and Russia have laid down some battleships lately. I say that no battleships have been laid down since "the navies of other countries" Return — a Return which has been discussed over and over again.

*MR. FORWOOD: I must interrupt my noble Friend again. The facts I gave had reference to work since March in last year.

*LORD C. BERESFORD: That lands the hon. Member in a bigger hole than ever. It was only in December last that I spoke, and then I was proved to be altogether wrong.

*MR. FORWOOD: So you were.

*LORD C. BERESFORD: The hon. Gentleman says—So I was. I cannot understand what he means, and I must leave him to explain. It is impossible to argue with people who go about like a weathercock. They have altered their minds, and now they are going to do the right thing. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have called attention to what has been said in justification of the plan of the Admiralty. What my noble Friend ought to have done was to call upon his naval advisers to prepare a complete plan saying what ships are necessary for the defence of

the Empire, with its enormous amount of imports and exports. What has he done according to his own statement? He has gone all through the figures of the Admiralty. I do not agree with him that the statements have been most extraordinary. Now, Sir, will the Civil Lord of the Admiralty tell the House that any Admiral besides Sir Arthur Hood declares that he is satisfied that this increase of the Fleet will meet all our requirements? Will it meet the wastage? We are not going to lay down any ships besides these for the next five years. Shall we, at the end of that time, have a Fleet? Do all the Admirals agree with Sir Arthur Hood? If the Civil Lord tells us they are, I shall be amazed.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: All the Naval Lords signed the statement that, if we make the addition to the Fleet, as according to the Bill we propose to do in the next four years, the Navy will be equal to the combined forces of two Powers.

*LORD C. BERESFORD: I think that that is very satisfactory, and as the First Lord tells us that, I am perfectly ready to go with him as far as that argument goes. But I do not know what the House of Commons will say when, in four years' time, they are asked for a further increase of the Navy, as I know hon. Members will be, as sure as they sit on those Benches. What we ought to do is to run our Fleet up to a given standard first, and then allow for wastage. The Naval Estimates would then be nearly normal; but as sure as you go on with this sort of policy you will have these panics over and over again. I think the First Lord makes out his plan in a half-hearted and very unbusinesslike way. Take, for instance, the wastage of the Fleet. He puts down four ironclads as obsolete. But according to his own showing at the end of four years 14 other ironclads will have become obsolete, and yet in the next three years only 10 battleships are to be built, so that he will not meet the actual wastage. With regard to some observations made by the hon. Member for Wansbeck, as to the naval position of this country and of France in 1843, I should like to point out that British commerce has, since that time, gone on increasing by hundreds of millions sterling, while the force which we have to defend it has hardly increased at all. That is the point before the country. The Government have put difficulties in their own way by the manner in which they have brought their scheme forward. If they had made the addition to the Navy in a proper, businesslike fashion it would have been far better for the country, and for the House of Commons, and for themselves. At the same time, I shall go into the Lobby with them, as I consider it to be absolutely necessary that our Fleet should be run up to the standard which they have laid down.

MR. R. W. DUFF (Banffshire): I propose to trouble the House with but few remarks. We, on the Opposition side of the House, have been somewhat disappointed by the statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty, who did not reply in the smallest degree to the speeches made by my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby. The hon. Gentleman commenced by accusing the right hon. Gentleman of having made misstatements, but he has not attempted to deny or explain away the speech of the First Lord at the Mansion House in 1886, in which he intended to convey to the country the idea that our Navy was strong enough to compete with that of any three Powers combined.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Nothing of the kind.

MR. DUFF: The right hon. Gentleman said that this country had more ships in commission than any three European Powers. Did that mean anything or nothing? I say it conveyed to the people the idea that our Navy was stronger than that of any three Powers. Of course, we knew that this was pure, sheer, unadulterated nonsense, and that in order to make the statement the Government would have to count every Queen's yacht, every receiving ship, and every old hulk even down to the Victory. But was it proper for the First Lord to go to the Mansion House and convey such an expression? I consider that my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby was perfectly justified in quoting that remark of the noble Lord's as evidence that nine months after the Government came into Office they were satisfied with the condition of things in the Navy.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The right hon. Gentleman has distorted my meaning. In the speech to which the hon. Member has referred I spoke of the grave defects and deficiencies in the

naval organization of the country, and said that they were in course of being remedied. I said it was as senseless to ignore any shortcomings as it was irrational to exaggerate or distort them. And then, after stating certain facts, I went on to say that we had in this country naval resources which were practically unlimited, and that it was the duty of the Department to see that proper steps were taken to utilize them.

MR. DUFF: I observe that the noble Lord has not alluded to the most important part of the speech, in which he said that "the number of ships in commission, armoured and unarmoured, exceeds the combined forces of the three greatest European Powers." We have heard no explanation of that statement, and later on at Birmingham he repeated the story of the quick-firing ammunition of which we have heard so much. In regard to that I should like to mention one circumstance, and that is, that in the year 1886 the amount taken for naval ordnance was £1,600,000, or £200,000 more than we are spending just now. Yet we are told that at that time there was a serious deficiency in the ammunition. The Secretary to the Admiralty has accused me of misrepresenting the evidence of Sir A. Hood. Now, I may mention that I have had a correspondence with Sir Arthur on the subject. He appeared to think that I misquoted him, and I told him that if he was not satisfied with my explanation, I was perfectly willing to publish it. He said, however, that there was no necessity for that. I confess that I am still at a loss to understand the position of the Admiralty with regard to an increase in the Navy. The First Naval Lord told the Committee on the 16th June that he only wanted six more cruisers.

*MR. FORWOOD: By 1890.

MR. DUFF: He was several times asked, are you satisfied with the armour clads, and he replied yes, provided you build me these six cruisers. Yet he admits that fourteen days afterwards—on the 1st July—this scheme was in print, at the very time when, as has been declared over and over again, our Fleet was equal to the combined Fleets of France and Russia.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Never.

MR. DUFF: Do not be so rash in contradiction. I say we have had that statement over and over again. Now, the Secretary to the Admiralty, in a speech delivered at the London Chamber of Commerce in March, 1888, said:—

> "But it was asked whether the British Navy was able to cope with any reasonable combination of Foreign Powers. It could be answered that England was more than equal in strength to two of the greatest nations in Europe—France and Russia."

*MR. FORWOOD: Will the hon. Member continue the quotation, and not divorce it from the context? In the next sentence I gave the numbers, and on those numbers I based the comparison.

MR. DUFF: I venture to say that that statement contains the deliberate opinion of the Admiralty.

*MR. FORWOOD: I gave the numbers and compared them.

MR. DUFF: I take the words "equal in strength;" how can that mean equal in numbers? That was the opinion of the Secretary to the Admiralty on March 23. On the 1st July he gives us a different account. How is it possible for the House or the country to have any confidence in such a vacillating policy as that of the Government? When I said the other day that the First Naval Lord must, while he was giving his evidence before the Committee, have had the present scheme in his pocket, I meant that he must have had it in his mind, for it was in print on July 1.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The scheme was not in print then.

MR. DUFF: The First Naval Lord has stated that it was in print on the 1st July; he stated that in the correspondence, on his honour as an officer and a gentleman. The Secretary to the Admiralty has accused the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby of making garbled statements. I leave the House to judge which are the most garbled, his statements or those of the Admiralty. I quite agree with my right hon. Friend that the Government scheme is really that of the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone watered down; but while the noble Lord has put forward his scheme in a businesslike spirit and said what he thinks the British Navy has to do, and how many ships are required for the work, the Government have given the House no reasons whatever for their scheme. In the interests of the Navy, which I have very much at heart, I regret the spirit of

swagger in which this Bill—purporting to spend twenty-one and a half millions, whereas really we are only going to spend eight millions extra—has been introduced.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): I think the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby has completely knocked overboard this scheme of the Government, and it was evidently the duty of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty to attempt to put it on its legs again. Now, Mr. Speaker, opinion on this side of the House, and out of doors, will certainly be that the Secretary to the Admiralty has not succeeded in re-establishing the case of the Government. We were asked in the original Resolution to declare that it was expedient to increase the Navy considerably and to spend a large sum of money in the course of the next five years, and I confess that as the debate goes on I am becoming profoundly convinced that this is a scare to which the House of Commons is asked to give way, and that the longer the question remains under consideration, the less necessity will be shown for this extraordinary outlay. Sir, it is quite right—and no doubt the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Leader of the House of Commons were well advised in attempting to close the debate on Friday night—that the less opportunity there is given for the continuation of the debate the better for them. But the debate having been continued, I am bound to say that hon. Gentlemen who have spoken this evening may fairly claim to represent the feeling of the masses of the people—they may say that they really reflect the opinion of the vast majority of the public on the scheme. It may be that the Government found it necessary to bring forward the scheme, but what a marvel it is that the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty should have had anything to do with bringing it forward. If he desired to maintain his own character for consistency, and for knowledge of the Department of which he has charge, he would have said, after the declarations he had made in the country and in this House on the question of our Navy being able to cope with any two Continental Powers, that he could not consistently come down with proposals which implied that the Navy was in no such safe condition. Now, many of us are placed in the difficulty of not knowing whether we are to believe the noble Lord's statement to-day, or the statement he has been making during the last two or three years. For my own part, I am disposed to believe the noble Lord's original statement; I cannot place any reliance upon his present declarations, and my belief is that he has been driven to change his position. I am afraid it is only too true, as was said by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, that the First Lord of the Admiralty is nothing but a weather-cock, and that he changes his position day after day, week after week, and month after month as events occur. I believe the Vote asked for to-night shows, on the part of the Government, a want of consideration and a want of deliberation. I am not going to occupy the time of the House beyond dealing with one or two points which the noble Lord has referred to. He stated that this proposed enormous extension of the Navy was received by all the Powers with satisfaction. I ventured to interject at the time an inquiry "What Powers?" and at the same time the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, asked if any diplomatic despatches had been received from the different Governments in Europe, expressing approval of this singular increase of the British Navy. Now, I ask what Powers did the First Lord of the Admiralty refer to. I fear, Mr. Speaker, that the British Government is taking sides, and is becoming a partizan in the squabbles of the Continent. I can understand that this proposal may be acceptable to Germany, and possibly to Austria and Italy; but does the noble Lord wish the House and the country to understand that Russia, or the United States of America, or France view this increase of the Navy to any satisfaction? The noble Lord knows very well these Powers cannot do so, because they must be aware that if we are arming in this way it is against a combination of some or all of these Powers that we are preparing. Well, Sir, the noble Lord has further informed us that this increase of the Navy is really intended to maintain the peace of Europe. But, Mr. Speaker, we were told at the outset that this extraordinary expenditure and this

large increase was intended to protect British commerce, and render the British shores safe from attack. Does the noble Lord intend us to understand that we are indulging in this enormous expenditure with a view to domineering over all the countries of Europe, and to maintaining the peace? If he does, I can only say that nothing more chimerical or more unlikely can be expected from British Government entering upon such a scheme which has been conceived in this way. If we are really interested in the maintenance of the peace of Europe, I venture to suggest that we must adopt very different methods than this rivalry in the increase of the Army and Navy of this country, and instead of taking up such an attitude we should adopt a more rational position. The gallant officer stated that the time would come when the people of Europe would put a check to this mad expenditure on the part of Europe. I was glad to hear from such a quarter such a prophecy. We on this side have indulged this hope for a long time past, but we want to see the beginning of such a change, and what I assert is that if a great and general catastrophe in Europe is to be avoided it must be by proper steps being taken to ameliorate the present pressure upon the industrial classes of the Continent. In Italy, Austria, and Germany the industrial classes are manifesting a great spirit of dissatisfaction and of despair, and a determination also no longer to tolerate the crushing burden under which they writhe. I know it is difficult for any one of the States on the Continent to take the initiative, but I think we might usefully employ ourselves in this direction. What use is diplomacy, if it is not able to do something in the way of mitigating situations? We spend large sums in keeping gentlemen in every capital in Europe in order that we may remain on good terms with the different nations and in order that they may remove any international difficulties which prevail. What have these gentlemen been doing all these years? Have we any evidence that any attempt whatever has been made by these gentlemen to mitigate the situation on the Continent, to offer their good offices towards a general reduction of armaments on the Continent? If they have not used their good offices in this direction, I maintain they have failed in their duty, not only towards England, but to the world at large. I have said there is evidence of a disposition on the part of the present Government to lean towards the triple alliance on the Continent. I am not here to say that the policy of Germany, Austria, and Italy may not be one as well worthy of our support as any that France or any other Power can suggest, but I insist that we ought to take no share in any of these Continental struggles. We are practically boycotting France, and I ask how by such means we shall keep out of difficulty. I believe the people will in a very short time come round to see that the proposals of the Government are mischievous from first to last, and that there has been cast on the country increased burdens for which there is no necessity whatever, and which will only tend to aggravate the situation. ["Divide."] No doubt it is very important that Gentlemen opposite should dine at a certain hour, but it is also important that when it is proposed to spend 20 millions of money those who feel called upon to protest against the expenditure should be heard. I put infinitely more faith in a single act which has been performed within the last few days than I put in the expenditure of this extra 10 millions of money. The Lord Mayor of London has done this country splendid service by his presence in Paris, and by his declaration there that the British people wish to live on the best of terms with the French, and wish to remove every possible cause of jealousy, and, if Governments fail us, and if the House of Commons is not true to the people, then we must rely upon these other methods such as that taken by the Lord Mayor and the utterances of Members in this House who are entitled to speak on behalf of the industrial classes of this country to save us and the Continent of Europe from the catastrophe which seems impending.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I thoroughly agree with my hon. Friend that when it is proposed to spend enormous sums of money upon armaments, it is the duty of this House to carefully consider the proposition. I do not see how anyone can complain of this debate being prolonged, seeing that this measure has been described by the

Times, the official organ of the Government, as the principal measure of the Session. If the Government's scheme be right and good, one acceptable to the country, one which is capable of defence, surely it is in their interest that it should be discussed as much as possible in the House. Now, Sir, we were told in the Queen's Speech that the Navy is to be increased that it may the better protect our shores and our commerce. The First Lord of the Admiralty has said since that the object of it is the promotion of the peace of Europe. I suppose the promotion of the peace of Europe means an interference in the abominable quarrels which go on in Europe with which we have no manner of concern. Surely you do not want this Navy for that. It is only a year ago that the First Lord of the Admiralty said:—

"I am well within the mark when I say we are 30 or 40 per cent above the next most powerful Naval Power."

Where, therefore, is the danger to our commerce? What is the Government afraid of? I do not suppose they are anxious about commerce, for they are doing all they can to prevent sugar coming into this country. If there is any danger to the commerce of the country how is it that not one of the representatives of the working men in this House is found to support this measure? I see near me two friends of mine who are distinguished representatives of the commerce of the country—my hon. Friend the Member for Hull (Mr. C. Wilson) and my hon. Friend the Member for Southampton (Mr. Evans). Both of them are dead against this scheme. Their living depends upon commerce, and surely if any persons are competent to speak on this matter they are gentlemen of that description. The fact is, this Bill is to give us power to meddle and muddle in every abominable European quarrel that goes on. Therefore, the object of the measure is bad; it is not defence but defiance. This is a preparation for war, and I declare that preparation for war is the first step towards war. The Bill is also bad in the way in which it attempts to accomplish its object. How delightful it was to hear the hon. and gallant Admiral (Admiral Field) say that the scheme was one for compelling future Parliaments to do the bidding of the present Government. The hon. and gallant Gentleman also said another good thing. He said it was very well to get all this money voted while we had the Irishmen with us, a clear admission that he knows Home Rule is coming very soon. Of course there is danger of invasion. Lord Salisbury told us the other day there was danger of being invaded by the Irish. I should think he is the only person who entertains that opinion. It seems to me that from beginning to end the scheme is a confession of incompetence on the part of the Government. Some time ago we had a whole night of quotations from the speeches of the First Lord of the Admiralty and his subordinate, the Secretary to the Admiralty. We have tried to get a speech from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Ecclesshall Division of Sheffield (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), who, no doubt, had he spoken would have made a speech more absurd than either of the other two. But we have not succeeded in the attempt. Again, the scheme involves the adoption of a most unconstitutional course. If I may use the expression, I assert that the policy which the Bill embodies is an idiotic policy—a policy of unlimited brag. We are practically saying to other nations, "We are stonger, more powerful than you, and we will show you we are." The expenditure of our money in such an effort is the most wicked and wanton waste of the resources of the country that has ever been proposed. Whom is this done to please? Who is at the bottom of this? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) told us the other night that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford) is at the bottom of it. I have a great respect for the noble Lord, and for his ability and courage, but I do not think he has influence enough to get up a scare entirely by himself. The First Lord of the Admiralty said in this House that the Monarchies and Governments of Europe were anxious to prolong the state of European peace, and they therefore welcomed this addition to our forces as a guarantee that we should have additional power to secure the maintenance of peace. I think that was one of the most extraordinary statements I ever heard in this House. The argument is that these great additions

to our Navy are made to please other Powers. I suppose, then, we must be pleased to see them arming. Then the noble Lord (Lord G. Hamilton) says that the increasing armaments of other nations have rendered an increase necessary on our part. So that all nations are to go on arming against one another because they cannot keep the peace with one another unless they do so. I think that declaration of the noble Lord is the most ridiculous political statement we have ever heard, except, of course, the one respecting the invasion of Ireland used by Lord Salisbury. I must say I never heard any proposal brought forward with so little show of argument in its favour. It would almost appear that the nations of the earth who are indulging in this insane rivalry had gone stark, staring mad. I think it was Bishop Butler who said there were times when nations went mad, and I should think that this is one of the occasions. But it is more sad than mad to see the Government of this country taking advantage of this ridiculous scare, which they know is a scare, just to put a few contracts into the hands of a few shipbuilders, and to get places and promotion and good pensions for the fighting classes. [*Cries of* "Divide."] I do not know why the hon. Gentlemen who called out "Divide" should remain to hear me. They do not agree with what I say, and I have not much hope of converting them. There are, however, many hon. Members here who are ready to repeat my protest against this wicked and wanton waste of public money. There are many other hon. Members here ready to repeat the protest. Let hon. Members opposite retire until the Division. If they do not hear our arguments, I am sure they will vote with a much clearer conscience against us. I am rejoiced to find the working men taking this matter up, and the more this matter is discussed the more they will see that this expenditure is a dead loss to the working men. Mr. Ruskin says the time is drawing near for the workmen who are conscious of their own power and probity to draw together into action, and that the real, true cause of the increase of armaments is simply the gain of manufacturers of the instruments of death. That is the opinion of all great thinkers and writers and philosophers who have looked into this question—that these war armaments are kept up for the sake of a class and not in the interest of the people. The First Lord of the Admiralty never answers me when I put questions to him in this House. I suppose he cannot answer me. But let him try. I am sorry he cannot speak again in this debate, but he could send for the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett). I wonder what has become of him? The noble Lord (Lord G. Hamilton) talks about protecting the Empire, but he will not tell us who is the enemy he is afraid of, or what danger there is of our quarrelling with anybody. As long as that question remains unanswered, the Government remains condemned. If we really are on the cordial relations with foreign countries that the hon. Member says we are, why is it not possible for us to enter into negotiations with them? Mr. Cobden has been quoted to-night, but I would point out that in the very speech which has been referred to, he said, "he would vote that money after every explanation to present such an absurd waste had taken place." That is the whole point. All we want is some explanation with other Governments. There have been since 1850 no less than 52 important cases in which international disputes have been settled by arbitration. My gallant Friend opposite (Admiral Field), in his speech the other night, extolled the Jingoes, and said our country had been made by Jingoes. I will tell you one achievement in this generation which exceeds the deeds of all the Jingoes ever born, and that was the settlement of the Alabama question by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), and I tell the noble Lord opposite (Lord G. Hamilton), that long after the massacre of Tel-el-Kebir and the devastation of Alexandria have been forgotten, that arbitration business will be looked upon as one of the noblest and soundest pieces of statesmanship ever accomplished. I say that the Government can at least negotiate with Foreign Powers for a reduction of their armaments. It is because I cannot find a shred of evidence that either the Ministers or their Ambassadors have ever made a single step or an honest endeavour to obtain a mutual reduction

of armaments that I am opposed to this Bill. And yet, Mr. Speaker, I am really not altogether sorry that this measure has been brought in. It will teach the people of this country what the Tory Government is capable of. It will teach the country that the Tory Government considers that working men were born simply to maintain fighting men. It will prove that the Tory Government absolutely refuses to appeal to the conscience and the justice of other nations, but will maintain for evermore that odious military system which produces the misery of the many and conduces to the advantage of only a very small portion of the people. I will finish with an epilogue, which I read only yesterday. One of the Kings of Prussia was once appealed to by a poor woman to release her son from military service. He applied, "I myself and my nobles are soldiers. What can your son wish for better than to enter the Army?" The poor woman answered, "Ah, Sire, fighting may be very good for you and your nobles who have nothing better to do, but my son has learnt to be a shoemaker." Mr. Speaker, it is because I am heart and soul for the shoemakers, and heart and soul against the nobles, that I give my most hearty support to the Motion of my hon. Friend.

The House divided:—Ayes 183; Noes 101.—(Division List, No. 119.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

NATIONAL DEBT BILL. (No. 219.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee, and reported without Amendment.

To be read the third time to-morrow, at two of the clock.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL. (No. 215.)

Read the third time, and passed.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £22,347, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, and of the Office of Land Revenue Records and Inrolments."

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I hope we shall hear something from the Chancellor of the Exchequer in reply to the remarks made on the last occasion, when we had this Vote before us, by one of the Welsh Members, in regard to the action of the Treasury in crushing out the development of the Welsh goldfields. To pursue the present system of royalties must result in their not getting anything like what they ought to get, and it will prevent this young industry from developing. That system is, to demand a certain amount on the gross proceeds of the mining, and that is similar to asking rent for land per acre irrespective of the character and situation of that land. Whether you work lodes yielding 5 oz. of gold to the ton, or lodes only producing 5 to 10 dwts., you ask the same royalty, though in the latter case there is no fair return for capital invested. The Transvaal gold fields were a rising industry, but would have been crushed by the action of the British Government, and it was only when the Boers resumed control again that their great development took place. I believe that not only in Wales, but in Scotland and Ireland, there is a field for this industry, and that gold can be found to the great benefit of the country and to the commerce of the world. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has stopped anything of the kind, and I understand that the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Pritchard Morgan) has thrown up his Crown leases.

*MR. JACKSON: That has been said, but I think it is a mistake.

DR. CLARK: The hon. Member said so. I think it would be a good thing to have an inquiry by Committee into this subject. We ought to have a Gold Law similar to that which we have in our Colonies to deal with this matter. I know that in Caithness and in other parts of the Highlands gold can be found in the silt of the rivers, and that men working it can make from a pound to thirty shilling a week. But they are entirely in the hands of the Government

officials and the factors of owners like the Duke of Sutherland, whose action sometimes puts a stop to the work. The Crown has the right to these Royal minerals, but prospecting for themshould be regulated by law, as is the case in the Colonies.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I had not the advantage of hearing the remarks of the hon. Member for Merthyr, but I gather from previous discussions that the operations he is engaged in warrant the action taken by the Treasury. Under a system of competition it is difficult if we are to prevent favouritism to proceed in any other manner than by accepting the offer of the highest bidder. It is unfortunate if subsequently the person whose offer is accepted finds he has paid too much for the privilege of working. We have every desire to promote these undertakings, and there is no wish to exact the uttermost farthing, but unless competition is to be a farce we have no alternative but to accept the highest tender. However, I will once more look into the matter, and see if there is any preferable system.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I am afraid that the range of vision of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in these matters is excessively limited, and that his knowledge of the Gold Laws in gold-producing countries must be not very extensive. The condition of the whole of this question of royalties is a disgrace to this country, a condition of things which I believe I am right in saying is not to be found in any other country in the world. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer supposes, with his knowledge of mining industry here and in other countries, that all the system of royalties to private individuals as well as to the State does not hamper and restrict mining industry in this country, all I can say is the sooner he learns what has been done in other countries, and what might be done here, the sooner and the better will he be able to discharge one of the responsibilities attaching to the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Now, I am not going to quarrel with the system of paying royalties on minerals in this country, whether gold or otherwise, to the Government of the country. That, so far as I understand the matter, is a proceeding not inconsistent with that theory of naturalization of the land, which a great many of us on this side conceive to be the proper solution of the Land Question. I am entirely in favour of the State receiving something in the way of royalties for minerals taken from our native land, which I recognize as the property of the nation; but what I complain of is that, in addition to such royalties, there is an additional royalty paid to the individual in whose land the gold is found, placing a double incubus on the mining industry.

THE CHAIRMAN: The only question of royalties open upon this Vote is in relation to the action of the Department.

MR. CONYBEARE: I am giving my reasons for an alteration of the present system and for an inquiry on the lines suggested by my hon. Friend who has just spoken. I do not, Sir, wish to question your ruling, but I would submit that I am entitled to give a reason for such an inquiry, and for some modification of the system of royalties that this new or resuscitated gold industry in Wales is hampered with. I am not going into the general question of royalties. I hope we shall have an opportunity at a later date, but I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman who has expressed himself as willing to look into the matter that he should go a little further and study from a textbook on the subject what has been done in other countries. The Gold Law of the Transvaal is perhaps the most perfect to be found in any mining country, for I happen to know it was carefully elaborated after inquiry into the state of the Gold Mining Laws of every country in the civilized world. If the right hon. Gentleman does not feel disposed to accept the suggestion for a Select Committee, will he undertake that this subject shall form an integral part of the examination into the general question of royalties, which is to be entrusted, as I understand, to a Royal Commission. Of this I have not heard much, and I should like to know whether the Commission will have specific power to deal with all questions affecting gold and silver money in this country. I can corroborate what has been said by my hon. Friend that a great many industries in other parts of the country

besides Wales are stifled and impeded. I am sorry I am precluded from going into details to show how the Crown and private royalties combined prevent development of the gold mining industry in Sutherlandshire. Loss must accrue to the Exchequer, over which the right hon. Gentleman presides like a guardian angel, if private owners are permitted—

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, Order!

MR. CONYBEARE: I am not going into the question of private royalties.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is diverging from the point—the way in which the Crown exercise the right.

MR. CONYBEARE: I did not understand that was the specific point to which I was tied down. I thought I could deal with the general question of the royalties to the Crown. I do not wish to trespass on forbidden ground. All I wished to say was that the gold mining industry is impeded in every part of the kingdom. The Chancellor of the Exchequer thinks it necessary to adopt the principle of competition, and says to prevent favouritism the highest offer must be accepted. That may be so. I am not against the general principle of public competition, nor would I suggest anything likely to increase that private jobbery which we know is inseparable from Tory administration, but I certainly do not understand that there is no alternative to placing on the industry a scale of royalties too heavy for it to bear. We must recollect the great competition now going on; the produce of gold in South Africa is increasing rapidly, and we should do everything we can to develop the industry here. The right hon. Gentleman said, as I understood, he did not consider that there was any grave ground for complaint because the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Pritchard Morgan) had sold his mines for a very large sum to a company. I had the pleasure the other morning of discussing that matter with my hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr, who showed me some of the specimens of gold from Wales. It is all very well for the right hon. Gentleman to comfort himself with the reflection that my hon. Friend made a good thing out of this business. I hope he has done so. But the right hon. Gentleman may not be aware that the outlay of my hon. Friend has been very large. I am given to understand that my hon. Friend has laid out no less a sum than £100,000 in his endeavour to make something of this mining industry. This I consider to be one of the most patriotic efforts we have heard of in recent years. English capitalists are only too ready to invest their money in every part of the civilized or uncivilized world, and it is a very great satisfaction to know that there are capitalists in this country ready to sink large sums of money in the endeavour to do some good to the industries of the country. Therefore, the fact that he has invested his money is an additional reason not that he should be heavily taxed, but that his patriotic efforts should be recognized, and that what can be done without unduly sacrificing the interests of the nation should be done for the purpose of encouraging him to carry on his patriotic efforts. I am not opposed to the principle of State royalties, but I think that if we cannot at once get rid of the additional incubus and burden of royalties, we ought, at any rate, so to arrange the scale of royalties as to impose the smallest burden possible upon a struggling industry like this gold mining industry. I have said these few words with the object of backing up what has been said by my hon. Friend, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer can give us some further assurance that the question will be considered by the Royal Commission which I understand is to be granted for the purpose of discussing the question of royalties.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol): We have heard a good deal of fault found with the mode in which these royalties are assessed, and, if I understand rightly, a great improvement could be made in respect of Crown royalties. I think that encouragement should be given to the finding of gold in this country. Although I do not believe that much gold will be found, yet, I think, that is all the more reason why those who are making the attempt should be encouraged. I would suggest that the royalty should be upon the gold discovered. One of the greatest difficulties is experienced in dealing with the sub-holders of land, and it does seem to me that they should not be an obstacle

in the way of working these minerals at a fair and reasonable rate.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is travelling away from the point. The hon. Member has heard me twice warn another hon. Member, who was pursuing the same line of argument.

MR. COSSHAM: I was wishing to ascertain whether any arrangement could be made by which the Government could get possession of and work the metals without private individuals standing in the way. I find in connection with this Vote of £28,000 that the sum of £9,000 [An hon. MEMBER: £11,000] well, either £9,000 or £11,000, is for legal expenses. Such an amount absorbed in legal expenses appears to me to require very considerable justification. I see that the addition to this charge this year is something like £3,033. I hope the Secretary to the Treasury will be kind enough to give some explanation of this large amount for law expenses.

*MR. JACKSON (Leeds): The total amount charged for legal expenses, including all the leases granted and all the legal arrangements, and all the conveyances that have to be made. [MR. COSSHAM: They are paid for.] No. The legal branch deals with them, and I do not think that the amount is excessive. With reference to the mining royalties, I may remind the hon. Member that it has been agreed to appoint a Commission on Mining Royalties generally, and these royalties will not be excluded from the consideration of the Commission. Several hon. Members have raised the objection that the amount of the royalties is excessive. There are two answers to that. In the first place, it would be very difficult for the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to accept half the sum from one individual when there is another man willing to give twice as much. If there is one man willing to give 1-15th, it necessarily follows that they ought not to take 1-30th. The other answer is that the Commissioners would be perfectly willing, if it could be shown that there was inconvenience or waste, or that the value of the property was diminished to a lower point than reasonable to the adventurer, to re-consider the terms.

MR. MOLLOY (King's County, Birr): Mr. Courtney, I have it on the authority of a Member of this House that he had taken up a large number of leases of royalties for the Woods and Forests, and that he had found it so absolutely impossible to work them under the conditions imposed that he had returned the whole of the leases to the Department.

*MR. JACKSON: The fact is not known to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. The leases had not up to this morning been returned to them.

MR. MOLLOY: I can only give you the authority of a gentleman who is a Member of this House. He told me the royalty charges were so great that he was obliged to return the leases. Perhaps it may be that the leases are now on their way. The example of all other gold-bearing countries will prove the practical inconvenience that must arise from these very large charges. Australia and America and other gold-bearing countries which started with royalties have absolutely abandoned them, whereas in this country, where a certain number of people are seeking to develop gold mining, a charge is made which renders it impossible to go on with the work. In foreign gold-bearing countries a charge of 5s. or 10s. for each registered claim is made, on condition that the property shall be worked and not kept idle. You ought to be guided by the experience of Australia, America, and other gold-bearing countries, which, having started by charging large royalties for gold, have abandoned them and contented themselves by charging a few shillings for registering a claim and requiring that the property should be worked. But the Secretary to the Treasury says—"Why should we give a reduction of half or even of less when we find there are a large number of people who are willing to give the whole?" The hon. Gentleman knows that whatever charge he likes to make there are a certain number of people who would accept the terms in the hope of getting something for themselves; but I say that that is not the class of people you would desire or who are likely to do any good. I know that in Ireland at the end of the last century the Government dealt in the same way with the gold interest there. The mines were then being worked by the peasantry, and in the course of a year and a half they actually

washed out something like £90,000 worth of gold. The Government then took the matter in hand and charged a royalty. What was the result? Why, that from that day to this not a single penny piece has been made, and a large loss was created by the action of the Government. Again, in Wales only 30 or 40 years ago a similar gold industry was started at a well-known mine, but the moment they came to difficult ground, when the production was much less than at first, the royalties charged by the Crown absolutely ruined them, and they had to abandon the development of the mine. There is no reason in these charges, and the only attempt to answer the arguments urged against them has been that made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year, the reason he gave for maintaining them being was that if the Crown did not keep them up some middlemen would step in and make money out of the industry. Was there ever such an argument as that? Why, the right hon. Gentleman knows that in every business there must be middlemen, there being in most cases the manufacturer, the wholesale buyer, and the retailer; and it is impossible to get rid of the middlemen. Therefore the reason given by the right hon. Gentleman was only an excuse invented on the spur of the moment, because he had no better one to put forward. Now, on the one hand there is the loss the industry has sustained through the action of the Government; while on the other hand the Government make nothing by the course they take in this matter. The result is that the industry is being killed, and in order more particularly to draw the attention of the Government to their most ruinous and unreasonable conduct, I will move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £200.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £22,147, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Molloy*).

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan): I may state that I have not any gold mines myself, but that as far as I can judge gold mining is a very poor business in these countries. If there is only a very small quantity of the ore in the quartz or earth taken out of the mines, a correspondingly low royalty ought to be asked. I think it would be well if the Government agreed to give short leases and low royalties for a few years, in order to encourage speculators to try for the gold that is to be had; because unless there is some profit, no one will be induced to risk money in making an expensive examination as to whether the gold exists in sufficient quantities to pay for the outlay. These are very speculative times, and I have no doubt that if a low rate of royalty were charged, the result would be, that people would be induced to take the risk. People will not be inclined to take very long leases on such a speculation, and I am sorry the Government should insist on leases of that kind. Probably ere long, an agitation may arise against the present system of royalties, and it would be wise on the part of the Government to anticipate that by the adoption of a more reasonable course.

*MR. PRITCHARD MORGAN (Merthyr): The Chancellor of the Exchequer has stated that I have sold all my mining interests and netted a large sum of money. I deny the accuracy of that statement. I have not sold any of my freehold property, but on one of my leaseholds I have capitalized. What I complain of with reference to the action of the Woods and Forests Department is that they will not allow me to develop the property-freehold I have acquired in North Wales without going to them for a license, and paying for it. I say that that is unfair and unjust and not the way to encourage enterprize. The Crown does not claim the right of entering on land and working the mines itself; but it claims to prevent the removal of gold and silver on to the high road outside the limits of such land. That is what is claimed, but what I believe is the only right of the Crown under the Statute of William and Mary is to have the right of pre-emption at a price fixed by the Statute of George II. at £25 per ton. Inasmuch as the Morgan Company have 100,000 tons of ore which is ready at the present moment, I should be glad if the Woods and Forests Department would comply with the letter of the law and give a cheque for £2,500,000 and take the ore away. But instead of doing this what do they do? They file a Bill against me to prevent my

searching for gold in that portion of Wales where no gold exists—I mean that situated where my own residence is. That action was commenced on the 26th April, 1888, and although I have endeavoured by every means to bring the case on for trial, they hamper me in every possible way. The other day the Crown, through its solicitor, (who is paid £1,200 or £1,500 a year for looking after the interests of the Woods and Forests), was ordered by the Court in the ordinary course to find security for £5—a merely nominal matter—and I am now to be compelled to contest an appeal to full Court as to whether or not the Crown should do what every other litigant does and enter into that security. This is the way the proceedings are being delayed. The other day I wanted to surrender an old license and take out a new one for a stated period; and for surrendering the old license and obtaining a new one they charged me the sum of £32. 11s. If that is the way to encourage industry (where the Crown has no legal rights whatsoever), what course of conduct would they adopt if they desired and determined to injure it? Now, Sir, I should like the House to understand the position of the matter, and to know what I have paid the Crown in actual money. We have produced in the twelve months ending March, £32,919 worth of gold from 5,297 tons of quartz, the yield of which was 1 oz. 18 dwts. Now, the royalties paid to the Crown in hard cash amounted to £1,104 10s. 5d. I do not include the royalties paid to the landlord. The Stamp Duty on the transfer of this property, which was worth nothing until £30,000 was expended upon it, was £802; the income tax on dividends £262 10s., and I myself paid £125 income tax, the total sum thus paid to the Government being £2,294 0s. 5d., or over £50 per week has this industry been taxed so far as one single mine is concerned. Now, I say that that is exceedingly unfair and unjust, and if any man, as the law now stands, owning a piece of land in Wales, desires to dig a hole in order to see if there is any gold in his property he must first pay a sum of seven guineas to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. Not long ago these Commissioners sent to me a form to fill up, and I will read it in order that the House may judge of the way in which that body is carrying on its business, and whether it is doing so in a proper manner. This is how the form reads:

"Amount of store or vein stuff raised from —acres of land," "amount of visible gold stored," "visible gold delivered to the small machines"—and I am at a loss to understand what is meant by small machines—"poor ore delivered to machines," "result from the poor ore."

I do not understand that either. In answer I wrote to the Woods and Forests Commissioners—

"I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th February. If I were to fill up and certify the document which you have sent me, it would necessarily be of a most misleading character. I have not stored 6 cwt. of visible gold, nor have I delivered one ton of visible gold to any small machines. I must confess my ignorance as to what 'small machines' mean, and if I may be pardoned for saying so, I think it absolutely necessary, if accounts have to be rendered, that the forms should be altered in every respect. I hope to have an interview with Lord Salisbury at an early date, to obtain from him an expression of his views upon the subject of royalties and returns generally."

I then received a communication telling me I might alter the form in any way I liked. Here is another communication I received on the 31st December, 1888, in answer to one in which the Commissioners of Woods and Forests having written to me asking the conditions of the law, I had forwarded them a copy of the Act of William and Mary—

"Dec. 31, 1888.

"Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Cully to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th inst. enclosing a copy of the Act William and Mary, cap. 6, in which you state there is mentioned auriferous and argentiferous ores, and upon which you founded your statement, that the persons who work lead mines have to give notice to the Crown that they have ores to dispose of. Mr. Cully is obliged to you for sending the copy, which, however, I am to return, as the Act is well known to Mr. Cully, and had been referred to before his previous communications were sent to you. Mr. Cully finds no provisions in it requiring persons who work lead mines to give notice to the Crown that they have ores to dispose of, neither is it the practice for such notice to be given. The Act gives the Crown the right of pre-emption at certain prices of copper, tin, iron, or lead ores, but it does not mention these ores as auriferous or argentiferous. I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,
"J. Russell Sownay."

Now, Sir, in order to show the manner in which the administration of this office

is conducted, I may say that the law is clear and unmistakable. Where gold or silver is obtained mixed up with iron, copper, lead, or other base metals, the Crown have no earthly right to it. The only right they have is the right of pre-emption at £25 per ton, and I ask this House to consider, whether or not the Woods and Forests Office is carrying out its duty efficiently or properly, or whether or not the House would be justified in saying that the Vote shall be reduced by a small amount for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to the administration of the Department. I say that this mere circumstance of the one incident I have related to the House, that of £32 11s. being charged for nominal licenses to entitle one to search for gold upon private land, is a fact which ought to be taken into consideration by this House, and which I submit justifies the Committee in reducing the Vote in the manner which has been proposed.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, E.): I venture to address a few words to the House, because it was my good fortune about thirty years ago to be the Finance Minister of the Colony which has produced, I believe, the largest amount of gold, and I am personally acquainted with the legislation on the subject which has been referred to by the hon. Member for King's County in his short account of the policy pursued in the Colonies on this matter. During the first few years the gold mining was carried on in the colony, a good deal of difficulty existed in regard to the claims of the Government, and at last a decision was arrived at as to the best manner of charging for gold belonging to the Crown. In the first instance it was endeavoured to obtain the revenue by means of imposing a tax of so much per month upon all those who were employed in the industry. That tax, in the first place, was as much as 30s. per month, but it was found to be onerous and impossible to collect, and then the Government after the appointment of a Royal Commission, established a royalty amounting in the first instance to 2s. 6d., and afterwards to 1s. 6d. per ounce. This was collected for some years, and then was found to prove obstructive to those who were engaged in the industry, and therefore after trying these different experiments the colony did what I believe all the colonies in which gold is obtained have done—they came to the conclusion that it is impolitic to attempt to charge these large sums, whether by way of personal payment or by way of royalty, and at the present time all these Acts have been repealed, and all that is done is to obtain licenses from the Crown for working any particular districts on plots of land which are marked out by the proper authority. There is no tax whatever either upon individuals or with respect to the gold thus obtained, and this system has been found to be the most advantageous to the public, and the only system under which the industry can be carried on with success. I would venture to suggest to the Government—and I do not know to what extent the history of the gold colonies is known to the Treasury or to the Woods and Forests Office—but I would advise the Government to follow some such system of granting licenses without imposing any charge upon individuals or in respect of the amount of gold obtained. I would not advise them to attempt to raise the revenue—and I had no idea it was so much as that which has been described by the hon. Member who last spoke. I understand from him that a revenue of as much as £2,000 was paid in respect of gold won by one company. I do not know whether the Treasury have ever had this matter under consideration, but I think that the experience of other countries, and the failure of the attempts to raise revenues in the way I have indicated, ought not to be forgotten, and that in regard to the gold mining industry in Wales and in Ireland, which might be carried on with great public advantage, I would venture to hope that some such change as I have indicated will receive the approval of the Government.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have listened with great interest to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. Undoubtedly the Treasury are not fully informed as to the legislation which prevails at the present moment in the Australian Colonies upon this subject. Now, the question is the proposal to reduce the Vote, but I should like to point out that the Commissioners of Woods and Forests are trustees of the public Revenue, and are bound to adopt all the means in their power to

obtain revenue without oppression in the exercise of the rights of the Crown. Any hasty vote, therefore, on the part of the Committee would be a very serious matter, and would impede rather than promote the consideration of the question. A Committee has been formed to inquire into the administration of the Woods and Forests Department, and this question might be most usefully considered by that Committee. We should then acquire information which would guide the Government and the House in the decision to which they may ultimately come on this vexed question. It is clearly the duty of the Government of the day to guard the interest of the country at large, and we should not be wise in hastily or rashly giving way to a sense of injury or a difficulty which might be thrown in our way. I trust the House will be satisfied to let that question come before the Committee which will be appointed in the course of a very few days, and which has been granted by the House in order that the whole matter may be thoroughly, impartially, and judicially inquired into, and then we shall be able to make such recommendations as seem best in the interests alike of those engaged in the industry and of the State, which has a deep interest in it, as well as of the community at large.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): The First Lord has granted a Commission on Mining Royalties, as well as a Committee to inquire into the working of the Woods and Forests Department. Now the hon. Member for Merthyr complains, as I take it, that while the Committee and the Commission are pursuing their inquiries, he is having his industry broken up by harassing legal proceedings. Surely it is only fair that while the inquiry is proceeding he should not be subjected to this pressure.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am sure there will be no desire on the part of the Government to press hardly on any individual while the inquiry is proceeding. I, however, think it is hardly right that an individual, though he is a Member of this House, should appeal to it on a question which ought to be decided in a Court of Law. If any good and solid ground can be given for a stay of proceeding, no Department of the Government will oppose it.

MR. CONYBEARE: May I point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the hon. Member for Merthyr has not appealed to the House on his own account. Surely if a grievance can only be raised by detailing personal experiences, hon. Members are not to be debarred from bringing before the House oppressive measures which may be taken against an industry like this. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury was in the House when my hon. Friend was explaining that he complained not that those proceedings had been instituted against him, but that in certain minor details the representative of the Government was proceeding in a manner which must strike everyone as oppressive. Surely it was not for the Law Officers of the Crown to force an appeal on a peddling point such as an order in Chambers that they should, like any ordinary litigant, give security for £5. Now I wish to ask what kind of Committee the Government intend to appoint, and whether it will have power to take evidence as to the mining laws of foreign countries? The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury has admitted that there is lamentable ignorance on the part of the Woods and Forests Department, and it is absolutely necessary we should have light thrown on the whole system of mining laws, both in this country and abroad.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am sorry the hon. Gentleman has not followed the statements I made in the House on this subject. The Royal Commission will have full power to inquire into royalties and their economic effect in this country, and also specially to inquire into the practice in those matters in the Colonies and foreign countries. As regarded the Committee of the House it will have unrestricted power to inquire into the administration of the Woods and Forests. I do not think that any powers could be wider than these.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I think the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman very satisfactory, and hope my hon. Friend will not press his Amendment. The hon. Member for Merthyr, who is the pioneer of the industry in this country, has been compelled to throw up all his Crown leases.

*MR. JACKSON: I do not want to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but I can

only repeat that the Woods and Forests are not aware of his having done so.

DR. CLARK: The hon. Member himself said that he had thrown them up. I think we are in a more satisfactory position as the Select Committee and the Royal Commission will be able to thresh out the different aspects of the question, and the Government will know what the law is and will gain experience from the blunders committed by our Colonies and by foreign countries in the past. They ought to be able to get a fair royalty.

*MR. PRITCHARD MORGAN: Hear, hear.

DR. CLARK: They ought to have a fair share of these royal metals, but the fault of the present system is that the same rent is charged for all classes of land. The same royalty is placed upon ore which yields 5 ounces a ton as upon that which yields 5 pennyweights a ton, although the cost of producing is vastly different. In that way the industry is being crushed. I am glad the Government have granted that inquiry, which I hope will result in some of the wealth which is lying waste in the rivers of Sutherlandshire being utilized, for there are many places where a man might earn 30s. a week by simply washing the sands on the river beds.

*MR. PRITCHARD MORGAN: I understand that on more than one occasion in this debate a statement has been made to the effect that I have not surrendered my Crown leases. The House is unfortunately somewhat ignorant on this subject. The facts are that there are private lands and Crown lands in which I am interested, and upon both of these the Commissioners of Woods and Forests insist on a license being taken out. On one property, in which I am not solely interested, I have not thrown up my Crown lease because I am not in a position to do so, but in all other instances I have thrown up my Crown leases, or take notes as they are sometimes called, and have informed the Woods and Forests that I will not continue tenant to so unjust a landlord. The hon. Member who last spoke has indicated the real sources of the difficulty. On one occasion I communicated with the Commissioners of Woods and Forests informing them that I had treated 100 tons of ore and have produced only 4½ dwt. of gold per ton. That gold was obtained at a loss, and I asked them consequently—Are you still determined to charge a royalty upon gold obtained at a loss, and thereby increase the loss? The reply was that there was no earthly reason why the Crown should forego its rights. I say that the Woods and Forests Commissioners are incompetent to administer the Department. As far as I am concerned, I will not ask my hon. Friend to press his Amendment. All I asked is that the Government will kindly lend an ear to that matter. The ground of my complaint against the Government is that the question before the Court of Chancery is delayed by appeals about such paltry matters as giving security for £5. All I want is that we should come to trial and have the question decided. I do not ask any favour or affection of the Government, for I am sure that if I am wrong and the Woods and Forests right the country will take sufficient interest in the matter to induce the House to deal with it, and with the question of royalties on gold and silver in particular.

MR. J. G. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): The First Lord of the Treasury has protested that cases of private oppression should not be brought forward in this House. I think, however, we have a right of complaint when the Crown on being ordered to lodge security for £5, take the matter before a Superior Court at the expense not only of the Crown, but of the hon. Member for Merthyr. This is the way in which law costs are heaped up by the Officers of the Crown; they manufacture costs in order to put money into their own pockets and into the pockets of their companions. I think it is the duty of this House to enter a protest against such conduct, and I think the Government ought to caution the Law Officers of the Crown against sanctioning litigation in similar instances, unless there is a clear case of its necessity.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 71; Noes, 116.—(Division List, No. 120.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland): I wish to refer for a moment to a matter affecting Orkney and Shetland. Certain portions of land there have been sold by the Commissioners of

Woods and Forests, and we do not know what has been done with the proceeds. A rumour prevailed at the time in the district that the money was used for the purpose of providing Londoners with Regent's Park, and the inhabitants of Orkney naturally felt that it should have been devoted to local purposes instead. I wish to hear some account of these funds, and to have an assurance that the money shall not be allocated to purposes outside Scotland.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol): In consequence of the unsatisfactory explanation given as to the legal charges, I venture to propose the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question, "That a sum, not exceeding £21,347, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Handel Cossham,*)—put, and negatived.

Original Question again proposed.

DR. CLARK: Will the Government take into consideration the question I raised last year about the large farms on Crown land in Caithness, and will this matter be dealt with by the Select Committee?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I cannot imagine that anything connected with the actual business of the Department is not included in the reference.

*MR. JACKSON: I do not wish the hon. Member for Orkney to think I am discourteous towards him, I am sorry I have not the particulars necessary to enable me to answer the question raised by the hon. Member, but I will make inquiries. I can, however, give the hon. Member an assurance that it is not likely the money derived from the sale of the lands in Scotland would be expended in London, and, certainly, it could not be expended for such a purpose as Regent's Park.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £42,250, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works and Public Buildings."

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I move to reduce this Vote by £100. I feel I am hardly doing my duty in limiting it to that small amount, but there is no man in this House more generally liked and respected than the First Commissioner of Works, and I can assure him that I feel for him the highest personal regard; hence the small monetary penalty I wish to impose on the result of his misdeeds. Now, Sir, it seems strange that I should have to stand up here as the guardian of public rights against hon. Members on the other side, but I complain that the right hon. Gentleman has handed over an important and historic monument, Dunblane Cathedral, from the custody of the Office of Works to that of an utterly unknown body, the Board of Manufactures in Scotland. Sir, I feel that I need not apologise for introducing this important subject to your notice. I know your admiration for these historic and antiquarian relics. I have had the pleasure of reading a speech of yours, delivered in Cornwall, in which, referring to the survival of an antediluvian war dance, locally known as furrying, you stated that if you happened to be in the district on the 5th of May you yourself would go a furrying. Now, Sir, Dunblane Cathedral is an institution which is older than the days of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, dating back to the time of the Culdees, while as a piece of architecture it has thrown Mr. Ruskin into ecstasies. Yet the right hon. Gentleman proposes to deprive us of this national property. Under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act the First Commissioner was authorized to advise with the Board of Manufacturers for the custody and preservation of this among other ancient monuments, and the result has been that the right hon. Gentleman, discovering that there were certain knotty points involved, handed over this national property to the Board of Manufactures. It appearing to some persons that there was not sufficient church accommodation in the district, it was proposed to spend a modest sum of £3,000 to erect an additional church, but some person, wishing, I suppose, to immortalize his name by the destruction of this noble monument proposed to give £20,000 for the purpose of converting or perverting the cathedral into a parish church. Now Sir, the Board of Manufactures has been entrusted with the administration of the money, and I believe they are

about to commence the work. The objections to that are three-fold. I contend that the right hon. Gentleman had no right to hand over this property to the Board. The proposal has roused the ire of the Nonconformists, who consider it a piece of gross aggression on the part of the Established Church heritors, and it has given rise to the greatest indignation on the part of archæologists and antiquaries, who protest that the conversion scheme will utterly destroy the architectural beauties of the fabric and make of it a mongrel building. The windows are no common windows. The architect has taken for his model the leaves of forest trees, which are placed in picturesque and tasteful arrangement, and he has constructed a window of which Ruskin speaks in glowing terms, and which is the admiration of all who see it. To put glass into such windows would destroy them. This was a church intended for a double service, whereas under the Presbyterian ritual there is but a single service, and so the church would be inappropriate for the purpose for which it is required. The right hon. Gentleman will tell me that architects have approved of the scheme. I know a number of architects have allowed their names to be appended to an approval of the scheme, some of whom have since had cause to change their views. I have been furnished with a letter from one of these gentlemen, a man of very high architectural eminence in Glasgow, in which the writer says, that everything that could be done to maintain the present ruined structure in the most perfect way could be done for a few thousand pounds, that £5,000 would be spent on restoration, and £20,000 in its destruction. So evident is that to anyone who takes the trouble to inspect the spot that my hon. friend the Member for Haddingtonshire (Mr. Haldane) who originally proposed to support the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman on the assumption that it would restore and perpetuate these windows, came back converted from a visit during the Easter holidays. I only regret that my hon. friend is not here now to join me in resisting this barbarous proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. I am perfectly certain the great concensus of opinion in Scotland is against it. Of course there are certain interested persons who are in favour of the scheme. There are the heritors who are ever willing to save this money, and there are some bigoted Churchmen who think that the people should belong to the National Church, and who would be very glad to have this particular place degraded into a parish church. I urge upon the House the immense importance of insisting upon proper constitutional procedure in a matter of this kind. If the First Commissioner of Works wishes to part with national property in Scotland the proper Department to whom he should hand it over is the Scotch Office, and not a mongrel and an altogether unsuitable and unknown body like this Board of Manufactures. I only propose to move a small reduction of the right hon. Gentleman's salary, partly because of my personal regard for the right hon. Gentleman, and partly because I should like hon. Members to feel themselves in a position to vote for the reduction without doing him any harm. I beg to move the reduction which stands in my name.

Motion made, and Question proposed "That Item A, Salaries, &c., be reduced by £100, part of the Salary of the First Commissioner."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, Dublin University): I certainly have nothing to complain of in the spirit in which the hon. Member has discharged his ordnance against me, but I think I shall be able to dispose of the objection which he has raised to the course which has been pursued by the Government, especially by the office which I represent, in reference to Dunblane Cathedral. In the first place, he said I had no right to hand over to the Board of Manufactures this ancient Cathedral. [Dr. CAMERON: "No constitutional right."] The hon Member must know perfectly well I did it under a Statute which gives me a perfect right to do it. But I think the ground the hon. Member intended to take up was that the body to whom Dunblane Cathedral has been handed over was not the right kind of body to whom it should have been entrusted. The name of that body is slightly misleading. But, although the title is peculiar, this

is an ancient body created in 1727 by Royal Charter, and is composed of 18 or 20 of the most distinguished persons of all political parties who can be discovered, I believe, in all Scotland, and, so far from its being a body hitherto unheard of, it has in its charge the National Gallery of Scotland, the National Portrait Gallery of Scotland, the Antiquarian Museum, and all the buildings which are the receptacles of those great artistic treasures. I do not think, therefore, that one could find a better body in Scotland to hand the cathedral over to. What I have done has been done after long consultation, not only with the Board of Manufactures, but with the Secretary for Scotland, and one principal reason why I did not hand it over to the latter was that the Secretary for Scotland is always more or less a political personage belonging one political Party or the other, and my object was to find a body which should be removed from all suspicion of political or religious partizanship. The second objection of the hon. Gentleman is that no precaution has been taken to secure the burial rights of the parishioners. The parishioners are neither placed in a better nor a worse position as regards their rights of burial by the transfer. I deny that the Board of Manufactures are at all likely to act in any way opposed to the interests or rights of the parishioners, but, even if they do, the parishioners will have the same means of redress before the tribunals of the country as they have always had. In the third place, the hon. Member says that this proceeding has raised the ire of the Nonconformists. I have no reason, except the statement of the hon. Member, for thinking so. A deputation waited upon me composed of persons of all political Parties, among them being the Member for Dumbarton (Sir A. Orr Ewing) and the Member for Haddington (Mr. Haldane), and with two such Gentlemen on one deputation I felt myself protected from any imputation of partiality on grounds of Party politics. I am told that what I have done has excited the indignation of archæologists, but I am assured, however, by other archæologists that it is an excellent thing. I have sent my own surveyor, and the restoration has also been examined by the Archæological Society of Great Britain and some of the leading architects of Glasgow, and they all express satisfaction with the manner in which the work has been carried out. I have seen my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Haddingtonshire, since he visited the place during the Easter recess, and he certainly did not give me the least idea that he himself has been at all alarmed in the subject. He merely stated that some persons on the spot had become alarmed by statements made in the public press, and he expressed his intention of making further inquiries on the subject.

*Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I rise to make an appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury, at which I think he will not be surprised. At Question Time to-day he promised that the Report of the Home Office Vote should be taken at 10 o'clock. It is now forty minutes past that hour. I therefore beg to move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. J. E. Ellis.*)

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I hope hon. Gentlemen will allow this Vote to be taken.

Mr. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): Certainly not.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: The discussion can be taken on Report.

Mr. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: At 1 o'clock in the morning?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: No; to-morrow. It was understood we should take two Reports of Supply, beginning at 10 o'clock; but for the convenience of right hon. Gentlemen opposite, I agreed to postpone the second Report. I thought, therefore, it was reasonable we should go on some little time longer with Supply itself.

*Mr. J. E. ELLIS: I understand there is not the slighest expectation of the discussion of this Vote being soon concluded, as several hon. Members desire to express their views about the policy adopted in regard to Dunblane Cathedral.

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): For official reasons it may be necessary from time to time to postpone the discussion of a Vote until Report; but I do not think it is a practice which ought to be encouraged.

*DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeen): I think it is very important that the adjourned debate on the Home Office Vote should be taken at an hour when there is some chance of its being reasonably fully reported. On a former occasion grave accusations were made against two scientific gentlemen; it is only right they should have a proper opportunity of replying.

MR. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: My objection to the Vote which was under discussion before the Motion to report Progress was made is that it is undesirable that any buildings under the control of the Crown should be handed over to private bodies.

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries): I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not insist upon taking this Vote; he has already got fifty-five minutes more than his strict due.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not think there is anything more unprofitable in the House than discussions as to reporting Progress, and therefore, if the House does not wish to go on with the business, I will not oppose the Motion to report Progress.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow, at Two of the clock.

Committee also report Progress; to sit again To-morrow, at Two of the clock.

SUPPLY [29TH APRIL].

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed [30th April], to Resolution.

"That a sum, not exceeding £79,688, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and Subordinates Offices."

And which Amendment was, to leave out "£79,668," and insert "£79,618." —(*Mr. Bernard Coleridge.*)

Question again proposed, "That '£79,668' stand part of the Resolution."

*MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I rise to support the Motion of my hon. Friend (Mr. Bernard Coleridge) to reduce the salary of the Inspector under the Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876, by the sum of £50. On the last occasion when this Vote was before the House my hon. Friend gave instances of very cruel experiments performed on living animals. I will not harrow the minds of Members by going into such details—my hon. Friend was justified in doing so to lay ground for his Motion—my remarks are of a somewhat different nature. The Act was passed in 1876, and was founded upon a Report of a Royal Commission, which sat to inquire into vivisection at a time when the public mind was very much horrified by details of the practice which became known. The Commissioners reported early in 1876. That Report emanated from a body of most emiment men, and those who have given any attention to the subject will know that it was by that Commission thoroughly investigated. Based on the recommendation of the Commission a Bill was introduced in 1876, which received the Royal Assent in the August of that year. Now, the pith and marrow of that Act lies in Clause 3, which places painful experiments on living animals under very severe restrictions. But during the passage of the Bill through the House of Lords, and mainly in consequence of strong representations from various scientific bodies, considerable alterations were made in this clause, with the result that the Bill when receiving Royal Assent had a very different shape to that which it had when it left this House. That part of the clause which provides for the issue of certificates, and sets aside the main restrictions of the licenses is to my mind very much to be regretted. One sentence in the Report of the Commissioners I may take as the foundation of my remarks. They say—

"The Secretary of State must have the most complete power of efficient inspection and of obtaining full returns and accurate records of all experiments made."

Evidence leads me to doubt whether at the present moment inspection is properly carried out. The intention of Parliament was perfectly clear, and was made manifest by the Division which was taken by Mr. Robert Lowe, now Lord Sherbrooke. He desired to relieve graduates of Universities from the onus of taking out licenses, but the House rejected the proposal by a majority of three to one, and

insisted upon no distinction being made between scientific men and laymen. In that spirit the Act should be administered. Now I turn to the Report of the Inspector, and, by the way, I may say that it approaches a Parliamentary scandal that we should, on the 29th April, vote the salary of an Inspector whose Report only comes into our hands on this the 20th May. I take the Report of the Inspector, Mr. Busk, which relates to 1879, and that of Mr. Erichsen for 1888, and I find that in 1879 36 of these licences were issued, and in 1888 there were 75 of them. In 1879 26 were operative, the others not being used, and in 1888, 55 were operative. But, whereas in 1879 there were 270 experiments reported, in 1888 the number had increased to 1,069. This enormous increase is precisely what the Royal Commission foretold. Then it becomes a very serious point who are the holders of these licenses. In 1883 there was a discussion in the House, initiated by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid) on which occasion he made a most careful and able speech that everyone interested in this matter might read with profit. My hon. and learned Friend mentioned the names of two or three men who, since the passing of the Act, had performed I think I may say, hundreds of experiments. Of these gentlemen one is Mr. C. S. Roy, and another is Mr. Rutherford, and both of these names appear in the Schedule of the holders of licenses for 1888. But there is also another name which has become famous or infamous in relation to this matter, the name of Dr. E. Klein, and in mentioning his name I come to the root of the matter, and to my contention the Inspector does not obtain full and accurate information. Dr. Klein appeared before the Royal Commission, and this is part of the evidence he then gave (Question 3538). Dr. Klein says—

"Except for teaching purposes and for demonstrations I never use anæsthetics where it is not necessary for convenience."

Then he is asked—

"When you say you never use them for convenience sake, do you mean that you have no regard at all to the sufferings of the animal?"

And the reply is—

"No regard at all."

Then again he is asked—

"You are prepared to establish that as a principle which you approve?"

And he says—

"I think that with regard to an experimenter, a man who conducts special research, and performs an experiment, he has no time for thinking what the animal will feel or suffer.'

Then there is another question—

"For your own purpose, then, you disregard entirely the question of the suffering of the animal in performing a painful experiment?"

to which he answers "I do." In relation to Dr. Klein's there is a remarkable circumstance mentioned in the Report. The Secretary to the Commission sent the witness a proof of his evidence; it was not returned promptly, and upon the Secretary writing for it, it was returned so altered and mutilated that the Secretary deemed it his duty to take the instructions of the Commissioners as to whether it should be printed as Dr. Klein wished. The Commissioners declined to print the evidence so altered. They printed it as originally given before them, and added Dr. Klein's amended version, as an Appendix to the Report. Now, I do not think that a person so treated by the Commission and who so treated his own evidence is a fit person to hold a license under this Act. If the Inspector obtains his information from the holders of licenses, then I say information from Klein is not to be relied upon. Now I return to the reply of the hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary to my hon. Friend, or rather his speech in the discussion, for reply it can hardly be called. By this time the right hon. Gentleman must have discovered that he fell into some extraordinary misconceptions. In in the first place, he spoke of Mr. Erichsen as having discharged the duties of his position for 10 or 12 years to the entire satisfaction of successive Secretaries of State. Now, the actual fact is that Mr. Erichsen was appointed in 1886 by the right hon Gentleman and Member for West Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). Then the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary went on to say that those charges recited by my hon. Friend were impossible; but we must admit the evidence given by my hon. Friend (Mr. Reid) in 1883, established a case for great watchfulness. I will now refer to some evidence in support of my contention that the inspection is insufficient.

In volume 179 of the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society for 1888, I find reference to experiments of such a nature as to shock humanity, experiments carried out by Mr. E. H. Schäfer, and this person's name appears as the holder of a license and a certificate relieving him from the obligations to kill animals before recovering from anæsthesia. In the *Journal of Physiology* for February, 1887, Dr. Pye Smith gives an account of experiments upon cats and rabbits extending over a period of six years. In the *Practitioner* of October, 1884, we have an account by Dr. Lauder Brunton as to the effect of extreme heat upon cats, baking the animals to death in fact, carried out by Mr. Cash, who, I observe, is the holder of five certificates under the Act. In the *Zoophilist* for April, 1888, I find Mr. Watson Cheyne, who is also a licensee under the Act, giving an account of the experiment of placing small glass balls full of croton oil under the skin of rabbits. In the *Lancet* of November 20th, 1886, Dr. Hughling Jackson observes in relation to some physiological reseaches—

"I say little of Brown Sequard's researches in epilepsy because Mr. Victor Horsley has recently repeated this distinguished physician's experiments."

Mr. Horsley, I find, is a licensee and a holder of six certificates. Again, at a lecture at the Royal Institution, May 29, 1885, we find how Mr. Coleman related experiments in freezing rabbits, by Mr. McKendrick, until they died, and Mr. McKendrick is a licensee. In the *Journal of Physiology* for November, 1888, occurs accounts of some terrible experiments by J. R. Bradford. I avoid details, but it is necessary to mention these things to get an idea of the importance of the point we are urging. The Home Secretary challenged my hon. Friend to say if he meant to suggest that the whole system of the Vivisection Act was a sham. I do not know that my hon. Friend went so far as that, but I do ask why, in these scientific publications year after year, we find these accounts of the most painful and horrible, and in many instances, unnecessary experiments on living animals, and still, year after year, we are lead to believe by statements of Secretaries of State and Reports of Inspectors that nothing of the kind is going on. Another misconception of the right hon. Gentleman was, that curare is not allowed as an anæsthetic, and that, therefore, experiments of which my hon. Friend has given an account were absolutely prohibited. The Act does not prohibit the use of the drug, and a whiff of curare, the effect of which soon passes off, would be permitted under the Act. The right hon. Gentleman is also mistaken as to experiments upon dogs and cats. Anyone who holds a simple license can vivisect a cat or a dog if an anæsthetic is employed. Now I come to a name mentioned by my hon. Friend, that of Dr. McWilliam, of Aberdeen University. In the *Journal of Physiology* an account of these experiments is headed "From the Physiological Laboratory of the Aberdeen University," and there is nothing to suggest to the reader that the experiments did not take place within the University. This point I hope we may have cleared up. And now as to the provision of the official whose salary we are called upon to vote. I do not doubt his scientific eminence; but this I do say, that he is a warm advocate of the system against which the Royal Commission reported, and in the evidence before that Commission there is given at great length accounts of the most terrible experiments performed by Mr. Erichsen. True, these experiments were made in 1845, so that Mr. Erichsen was either a very young man then or he is considerably advanced in years now. He was a Member of the Royal Commission, but he acted throughout almost entirely as an advocate of those who performed those experiments. Acting as he did, Mr. Erichsen is not a fit person for the position of Inspector. I do not ask for the appointment of a man who takes the strong view. I know many people who hold that no experiments should be allowed on living animals for purposes of research, but I do not hold that view myself. But I do ask for the appointment of an Inspector who will hold the balance equal between parties. If I wanted further evidence of Mr. Erichsen's unsuitability, I should find it in his letter to the *Scotsman*, of May 10 last year, a most improper example of the bad habit which is growing up among officials of writing to the Press. The position is, then, we have an Act of Parliament imperfectly carried out; to use the words of the

Royal Commission, the Secretary of State has not complete inspection and the fullest accounts of experiments made. I would put one or two questions to the Under Secretary, which he may be able to answer in his reply. Is he able to assure us that none of these terrible experiments are going on except in licensed places? Are all licensed places frequently and unexpectedly inspected? And, finally, are the facts and figures given in the Annual Reports of the Inspector derived from his own knowledge, or are they simply the statements of the persons who by Act of Parliament are under inspection? I cannot sit down without one word about the rather unjust attack made by the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) upon my hon. Friend Mr. Coleridge. The right hon. Gentleman said he had never known a greater abuse of the privileges of this House by any hon. Member than in his speech. Those who were present know that my hon. Friend made a most able, lucid, and cogent speech on the subject, and I say that when we are asked to vote the salaries of any of the officials, we are perfectly within our right in criticizing their conduct. I think the right hon. Gentleman will see, on reflection, that he was not within his right in so strongly characterizing my hon. Friend's speech.

*Sir H. ROSCOE (Manchester, S.): I rise to oppose the Amendment, and I do so, in the first place, because I believe that the Acts referred to are worked honourably and honestly by all the men of science who obtain their licenses or certificates under them, and that the inspection and registration are carefully done. I was glad to learn from my hon. Friend (Mr. J. E. Ellis) tha the does not object to the Acts if they are properly carried out; but I think that is not altogether the case with many of those who speak on the question. A great number of those who are agitating on this matter desire the entire abolition of vivisection, that is of experiments on living animals whether effected under anæsthetics or not. I believe those experiments are of the very greatest value, and both medicine and surgery have highly benefited from them, both in this country and abroad. They are experiments not mainly or to any extent which give pain to animals, but are conducted under such restrictions and with such care that the animals do not suffer at all. My hon. Friend mentioned the name of Professor Ferrier. The results following on the experiments made by that gentleman have, in the hands of many distinguished surgeons, and especially of Mr. Victor Horsley, actually effected the alleviation of one of the most dreadful diseases to which flesh is heir—the disease of epilepsy. Professor Ferrier's experiments proved that epilepsy is caused by the irritation of the surface of the brain as opposed to that of its mass. And it is now possible, solely owing to these experiments, to localize in an epileptic patient the actual seat of the pressure on the brain. In many cases a portion of the skull has been removed, a tumour has been found and removed, and the epilepsy has been entirely cured. In fact, in the same way, owing to previous experiments on animals, a diseased kidney can now be removed with ease, and thus the life of the patient saved. There is not a page in any manual of physiology of which the principles laid down are not in some way connected with, or dependant upon, these experiments on animals. Then, again, there is no doubt that the principles of antiseptic surgery, which have been laid down by Lister, have been ascertained by experiments of this kind. In the early years of the forties the deaths in the Vienna Lying-in Hospital from puerperal fever were 92 per thousand. In 1863, in consequence of the adoption of an antiseptic treatment, the death rate had diminished to 13 per thousand, and in 1881, through the introduction of stringent antiseptic methods, it was still further reduced to four per thousand. In the same way in the York Road Lying-in Hospital in this neighbourhood, in 1838, 26 per cent of the patients died from this complaint. The hospital was often closed, but was re-opened in 1879 on strict antiseptic principles. The result has been that there has been only one case in three years, or less than one per thousand. I might continue to quote an almost endless number of cases in which humanity has benefited to an undreamt of extent by experiments on animals, but now I will content myself by reminding the House of the most remarkable of all—namely, the cure and prevention of that most horrible of all

maladies, hydrophobia, by the discoveries of Pasteur. Not one of these cases of cure could have been effected without experiments, for the most part painless, on animals, which the Amendment now before the House asks us practically to discountenance. But, Sir, it has been said by the opponents of these Acts that animals are thus sacrificed to the selfish interests of man. Such a statement only shows an entire ignorance of the facts, because the knowledge obtained by these experiments has been of the greatest value to animals themselves. Take the case of anthrax. Through the labours of M. Pasteur again, we know that that disease—Russian cattle plague—can now be actually overcome by inoculation, and that every year hundreds of thousands of sheep and cattle are now saved by inoculation from a painful death. I trust that those who think of supporting the reduction of the Vote will bear in mind that to stop those experiments will be to arrest the progress of scientific and modern medicine and surgery, and that by voting for the reduction they attempt to throw a most undeserved slur on the character of a high-minded, conscientious and eminent man.

*DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I should like to say a few words about Dr. Klein, to whom reference has been made. He is a foreigner, and when he was examined before the Royal Commission he was not well acquainted with our language, and he has practically confessed that he lost his head and said things which he did not intended to say, and this is why he asked permission to correct his proof. He may have been wrong, but I think his evidence and proceedings can be explained by the fact that he was not a native of this country and was imperfectly acquainted with our language. We have been told that it is an objection against Professor Erichsen that he is an eminent man and has some knowledge of the subject with which he has to deal. I should have thought it was an advantage rather than otherwise that Mr. Erichsen was a man of some scientific knowledge. The experiments in asphyxia, to which reference has been made, he made 40 years ago, when he was a young and enthusiastic physiologist, and curiously enough they gained him the medal of the Royal Humane Society, they had a direct practical bearing and led to the adoption of improvements which have been the means of saving many lives. From that time Mr. Erichsen has not made any experiments. An intimate acquaintance with him enables me to say he is a man of singularly calm and judicial habit of mind and of recognized ability. Having retired from public duty as a surgeon, he has from patriotic motives taken up the distasteful and laborious work of this Inspectorship which brings him a good deal of worry and discomfort. The complaints I have heard of Mr. Erichsen from scientific men is that he is a great deal too strict, that he holds the reins too tightly, and that he will not allow latitude enough; and the Home Secretary lately received a deputation, including three of the highest scientific authorities, who represented to him the excessive strictness with which the Act is carried out. I notice, however, that when complaints are made of the Inspector's want of impartiality, they generally came from those who want a leaning in the direction of their own view, the adoption of which would make us a laughing-stock with every scientific society in Europe. In this matter neutrality seems almost impossible. All that can be done is to choose a judicially-minded man with some knowledge of the subject, and I think we have such a man in Professor Erichsen. The anti-vivisection party are really annoyed because Mr. Erichsen, more than anyone else, whilst acting as Scientific Assessee before the Royal Commission, pricked their bubble and showed how futile are many of the accusations brought against vivisection. The House knows pretty well what are the safeguards against abuse. A man cannot get a license unless he obtains a certificate signed by three scientific men of character that he can be safely trusted with these experiments. I am sorry not to see the hon. Member for Cambridge University (Professor Stokes), the President of the Royal Society, in his place, because he signs a good many of these certificates, and he could state with authority what class of men they are to whom these certificates are given. The public can

have reports of these experiments, and can judge for themselves as to whether or not they have been properly conducted. Laboratories are licensed from Aberdeen to Plymouth, and if it is proposed that these experiments shall be minutely inspected, even if a competent medical man could be found to take upon himself the odious task of acting as a scientific detective, going from one laboratory to another for the purpose, the expense of the undertaking would be enormous. It would be necessary to have scientific medical men to do the work, and I do not think it would be easy to find them. I think the time must come when you must trust somebody, and in spite of what we have heard to-night, from those who support the Amendment, I am bound to say that I think the person to be trusted is the scientific investigator whose sole cause of action is the alleviation of suffering. I have a better opinion of human nature—particularly scientific human nature—than hon. Gentlemen who have spoken against vivisection. I think we can trust the scientific authorities to carry out the law with all honesty and loyalty. From the Returns sent to us from year to year we can see that all the experiments which are carried out are almost conducted in public places and open to inspection by anyone. Objection has also been taken to Mr. Erichsen because he signed a memorial to the Royal College of Surgeon some years ago praying for better physiological laboratory accommodation, and the delusion is a common one that such institutions are largely used for the purpose of experiment on animals. But all who have any experience of them know that it is principally chemical and pathological work that is carried on, that experiments on living animals are few and occasional, and that they must invariably be carried out under the direct sanction of the law. Of course, nothing could be more unfair and calculated to lead people astray than to bring into account the cruel experiments that have taken place abroad. We all know what those experiments sometimes are, and that nothing of the kind is ever practised here—and we know that if some of the experiments that are conducted in foreign countries were practised here, the national feeling, the feeling of the students, and the sentiment of everyone, would revolt against them, and soon bring such things to an end. And now I have arrived almost at the conclusion of what I desire to say. I have only one point more—namely, the second point raised by the hon. Member for Sheffield as to the experiments carried on by Dr. McWilliam. Dr. McWilliam is a man of proved ability, who has made invaluable researches regarding the functions of the heart which give great promise of practical utility. It did not appear to me that the hon. Member for Sheffield was well instructed as to these experiments. I do not know where they were carried out, but wherever they were conducted, they were conducted absolutely and entirely without pain. I have received a letter from Dr. McWilliam on the subject which should satisfy hon. Members. He expresses himself astonished to find any charge of cruelty put forward with reference to his experiments, and says that anyone making such a charge must be misinformed. He declares that the animals experimented upon were profoundly anæsthetized, and were never allowed to regain consciousness; in fact, if they had been allowed to regain consciousness, the whole object of his experiments would have been frustrated. I am sure that the House will believe these statements. It is undoubted that in some cases it was necessary to apply artificial respiration, and the insinuation has been made that this proves that curare was used; but that does not follow. The reason why artificial respiration had to be used was because the chloroform which had been used as an anæsthetic interfered with the breathing of the animal, and artificial respiration was necessary to keep the animal alive. The Committee may take it from me that no curare was used. Though scientific men did not consider when the Vivisection Act was brought in that legislation was necessary, they have loyally obeyed it, and have honestly carried it out, and I venture to hope that after what I have said the Committee will say that Mr. Erichsen is to be regarded as a fit and proper person to carry on his duties, and that Mr. McWilliam ought to be absolved from all blame, and that the Amendment ought to be rejected.

Dr. Farquharson

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): I do not want to say much on this subject, as it is one that every man of feeling must recoil from speaking about. My hon. Friend below me has spoken about the utility of these experiments as if it were a matter conceded by scientific opinion or conformable to the common sense of other people, who are as much entitled as men of science to exercise their common sense about these matters of fact, that almost every cure for every known human ill has been at some time or other discovered by these means. And when men of science are beaten upon one point in this regard, they go to another. To-night it is anthrax, epilepsy, and antiseptic surgery. I have no doubt that these claims will be exploded after a short time; and then some fresh series of diseases will be brought forward as having been cured by means of this process. It is well-known that there are scientific men who are living and scientific men who are no longer alive who have declared their opinion that the whole of this business is a cruel imposture. After the lapse of many centuries, during which these practices have been going on, and when men of great attainments and of undoubted honour have declared them to be an imposture, I am inclined to accept with a good deal of hesitation the language of scientific men in these days concerning the subject. We find that men of science really attempt to occupy the same sort of position that priests occupied of old. They want to govern our opinion, and I have more confidence in all men together than in men of a special class. But the question we have to face is how the Act is being worked. It is stated that animals do not suffer under these experiments; but if I cared to inflict on the House a repetition of what was said by my hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield, I could give the House the most painful particulars of the most horribly cruel experiments that can be well conceived. Horrible cruelties have occurred that I do not wish to enter upon, but which will be found recorded in medical papers such as the *Lancet* as having occurred last year and in previous years. It is idle to say that these things do not take place. The Inspector under the Act is a gentleman named Erichsen, and I have no doubt he is an honourable man. He is placed in the position of umpire or guardian of the interests of these animals—who are not the constituents of any Member of this House. What is this gentleman? Mr. Erichsen is himself an avowed performer of these experiments and an avowed advocate of them in the case of the Faculty. Does anybody think he has given these things up ever since his appointment? [An hon. MEMBER: Yes.] That he has denounced them ever since? [An hon. MEMBER: Yes.] Well, I see a good many scientific men around me, and I will say, even if we can suppose he has not committed these acts for a number of years, yet it must be admitted that that is what he used to do; and I further say that he was a gentleman who acted the part of advocate of those who support this class of scientific experiments from the beginning to the end of the Royal Commission, and was not, therefore, an impartial person to administer the Act; and he no doubt thinks that people who hold my views are utterly beneath contempt and unworthy of consideration in this matter as can be gathered from some letters he wrote on the subject in Scotland. What I say is that Mr. Erichsen cannot be regarded as an impartial administrator of this Act, and that, whether the person appointed to this office holds one opinion or the other, we ought to have a man who has not committed himself by his own acts, as Mr. Erichsen has done, to one particular line on this important question. Well, Sir, what is it that we see is being done? We see that there are a number of gentlemen who have received licenses under this Act, and among them is Mr. Klein. My hon. Friend the Member for Rushcliffe (Mr. J. E. Ellis) has read his answers to a series of very short and perfectly clear questions as to which there can be no doubt at all, and anyone who does entertain the slightest doubt had better look at the language he is reported to have used when examined before the Royal Commission. On that occasion that gentleman said he had no regard for the sufferings of the animals experimented upon; that he had no time to think of them, but disregarded them altogether; and this evidence relates to some of the most cruel and horrible experiments ever

recorded—so horrible that I should not like to lay them before the House. I may also refer the House to some frightful experiments that were performed in 1883 by Mr. Roy and others—experiments which I will not detail; but those gentlemen have licenses and may continue to carry on experiments of the same nature. The fact is that, in my opinion, the administration of this Act has been little better than a sham. I believe that the Home Office is in the habit of deputing its jurisdiction with regard to these experiments to some persons or to some body of men who take not the slightest notice of what is going on. The best proof that the administration of the Act is a sham is to be found in the expression used by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeenshire when he said that if anyone said a word in favour of effective supervision under the Act, he would be regarded as a scientific detective. But that is just what we want. While experiments of this sort are allowed to be carried on, it is absolutely essential that care should be taken to ensure that they are carried on properly. I should like to know how the inspection is carried on—whether the Inspector personally sees what is being done when these experiments are carried on, or whether he merely takes the statement of those who perpetrate the acts which constitute the experiments. In fact, it is my belief that there is very little inspection at all, and I trust that one good result of this discussion will be that the Home Office may be stirred into taking much greater care in regard to this matter in future. I hope we may find that public opinion will be brought into harmony with the view which I and a good many others hold on this subject; and although it may yet be a long time off, I trust that by continuing these debates in this House in a fair temper we may be enabled to induce those who have animals entirely at their mercy to believe there is something more in the exercise of kindness than, I am sorry to say, seems to be the prevalent opinion among men of science.

*Sir J. LUBBOCK (London University): My hon. Friend who has just sat down has alluded to the necessity of showing tenderness towards animals, but I entirely deny that there is, in relation to this matter, any want of such tenderness among medical men. In fact, I entirely repudiate the view enunciated by the hon. Gentleman. Although there is a great difference of opinion in the Committee, I think, at any rate, we are all agreed in the desire to diminish suffering, and we only differ as to the mode in which that may best be done. My hon. Friend has said he is able to quote high scientific authorities who agree with him in the views he holds on this question. All I can say in reply to that is, that I very much wish he had done so.

Mr. REID: There is Mr. Morse.

*Sir J. LUBBOCK: Even if Mr. Morse may be regarded as one; he is only one. The almost unanimous opinion of those best qualified to judge is that these experiments have greatly diminished suffering, both on the part of animals and of mankind. But my hon. Friend seems to doubt that there are cases in which the experiments that have been made have really tended to diminish suffering. Well, in answer to that, I would point out that before such experiments were carried on, it was found that in cases of compound fracture from 50 to 60 and even 70 per cent of the operations proved fatal, whereas, at the present time, the percentage of deaths is not more than one or two, owing to the improvements in surgery, which have resulted from recent discoveries—a fact involving not only the preservation of an immense amount of human life, but also an enormous diminution of suffering. Then, again, take the cases of puerperal fever in women; it is proved by statistics that before the experiments, which have produced such great improvements in medical methods, there were in the lying-in hospitals fifty years ago 26 per cent of deaths in puerperal fever cases; whereas, at the present day, owing to the experiments which have led to the antiseptic treatment, the number of deaths in these cases has been reduced to less than 1 per 1,000. Again, in cerebral diseases—the most terrible forms of human suffering—take, for instance, epilepsy—recent researches have thrown much light on the causes of these terrible maladies, and the experiments that have been made give reasonable hopes of greatly diminishing

mental suffering, by means of successful operations, which would have been impossible some years ago. It has been said that the circulation of the blood was not discovered by means of experiments; but the great Harvey, to whom we are indebted for that discovery, always maintained that his experiments led him to that great discovery. That discovery, as we know, has led to important improvements in medical methods, and to an enormous diminution of human suffering. Then, again, take the case of neuralgia in the face. Previous to Sir Charles Bell's researches on the functions of the nerves, it was usual to divide the facial nerve, which is now known to be quite a useless operation. One of the most painful diseases from which human nature suffers is *angina pectoris*, but the discovery of the effect of nitrite of amyl —or, to speak more exactly, one of its components—has had a wonderful effect in easing human suffering from that disease. Then, again, the greater knowledge we now possess of the action of poisons—a knowledge which could only have been obtained by experiment—has gone far to stamp out the terrible crime of poisoning. Beyond this, we have one of the greatest discoveries of all — the introduction of anæsthetics. It must be remembered that vivisection, as practised under the Act, does not mean, in the greater number of cases, the cutting up of a living and feeling animal, but experiments performed under anæsthetic drugs; and it should also be recollected that under the name of vivisection are included experiments in inoculation, which have led to the antiseptic treatment which has so greatly diminished human suffering and death. The discovery of the properties of chloroform and laughing gas could only be ascertained by experiments, which the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down wishes entirely to prevent. The hon. Gentleman has spoken with some contempt of scientific authority.

MR. REID: With great humility.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK: He says, "with great humility;" but I did not perceive much humility in the attitude he took. I have the greatest respect for the opinion of my hon. Friend in regard to any question of law, but when the subject at issue is one relating to medicine I should rather look to the opinion of great medical authorities. My hon. Friend said there were differences of opinion, and he objected to accept the opinions of priests. Well, in all matters of theology there is a good deal of difference of opinion among the priests: but here, among the medical authorities, there is practically no difference of opinion. The International Medical Congress of 1885, containing the greatest Medical Authorities, not only of this country, but of the whole world, passed a resolution which was adopted unanimously, and which I should like to read to the House. It was as follows—

"That this Congress records its conviction that experiments on living animals have proved of the utmost service to medicine in the past and are indispensable to its future progress. That accordingly, while strongly deprecating the infliction of unnecessary pain, it is of opinion alike in the interests of men and of animals that it is not desirable to restrict competent persons in the performance of such experiments."

That resolution was adopted without a single dissentient. I say that this is a strong fact, and I think that no one can deny that medical men are most anxious to diminish suffering. I say, also, that when we see that the representatives of the medical profession at large and in the widest geographical sense are unanimously of opinion that the experiments which have been made have greatly tended to reduce suffering, we ought to be very careful to consider what we are doing before we decide on putting a stop to these experiments. I do not think the intention of the Act was to check experiment, but to ensure that no experiments were to be carried on except under proper safeguards. I believe we are practically united in what we wish to accomplish; the only difference of opinion is as to whether these experiments entail an unnecessary amount of suffering on animals, and whether they have been conducted with all proper precautions and a due desire to diminish pain rather than to increase it. But there is another point of view which I think the House ought to consider. I allude here to the pratical question. Anthrax is a disease which is very fatal to cattle and sheep. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, I am sure, will agree that the question of anthrax is one of very considerable importance from an agricultural point of view. Now, Sir, experiments which have

been made have greatly reduced this disease. In France in 1886 over 200,000 sheep and over 20,000 cattle were inoculated, and the number of deaths have been reduced to less than one-tenth of what it used to be. The Royal Agricultural Society were deeply impressed with the importance of that discovery, but when it was proposed to inoculate our flocks and herds so as to protect them from this disease, the Home Office interfered and maintained that to do so was illegal under the Act. On this the Royal Agricultural Society appointed a deputation to wait on the Home Secretary on the subject. Sir Matthew Ridley, in introducing the deputation, said:—

"We have come before the Lord President in consequence of the practical difficulty which was standing in the way of ordinary operations upon domestic animals on a farm, because it appeared that unless there was an absolute certainty about the effect of an operation it was illegal."

Lord Egerton of Tatton said that our herds were very liable to attacks from anthrax and swine fever, and that he believed that by inoculation those diseases could be to a great extent prevented; but that the law as it was at present stood in the way of any improvement. He also said—

"Being President of the Royal Agricultural Society I have had certain operations carried out with the view to see whether these experiments would be successful or not, but practically I have been prevented by the somewhat stringent application of the existing Act, and I am anxious that Act should be somewhat relaxed in order that these experiments may be carried out, because the county rates are burdened by enormous sums. I am anxious that something should be done, because the law as it at present stands is in the way of any improvement."

I am not now proposing to alter the law, but what I wish to impress upon the House, is that not only is this in the opinion of the highest agricultural authority a matter of great importance to the agricultural interest, but it also shows how many thousands and thousands of our domestic animals must be suffering from a very terrible and a very painful disease which might be entirely removed by more scientific treatment. Now, Sir, reference has been made to the Inspectors under this Act. Well, the first Inspector under the Act was Mr. Busk. I believe everyone who knew Mr. Busk knew that a more humane man never lived in this country. The present Inspector is Dr. Erichsen, who, it is quite true, holds with almost every medical man that these experiments have tended to diminish suffering, but I do not think that is any reason for interfering with him as Inspector under this Act. In conclusion I would like to read, at the request of Sir James Paget, a few lines of a letter I have received from him. Every one who knows Sir James Paget knows that he is one of the highest medical authorities of this country, and that there is not a more humane man living than he is, and he has begged me to express his deliberate conviction to the House that "in his opinion and in that of the overwhelming majority of the medical profession, the experiments which have been made have led to the most important results—that very few of them involved any pain, and that they have effected already an immense diminution of sickness and of suffering." He hopes that the House will not agree to the Amendment, though he was sure that it had been proposed with the very best intentions.

*Mr. STANSFELD (Halifax): I will not detain the House for more than a few moments. It does not appear to me that the question we have to discuss on the Amendment of my hon. Friend, is the utility of vivisection. The question we are engaged upon is the administration of the Act of 1876, and what I propose to do in a very few words is, first of all, to say and to show why that Act requires very careful and watchful administration. How is it that I do not at present see the evidences of sufficient watchfulness in that administration? I am perfectly open to conviction. I say at this moment I am not aware of that sufficient watchfulness. And lastly, I want information upon several matters concerning the working of the Act. Now, Sir, with reference to the nature of the Act and the necessity for this watchfulness, let me point out its Peculiar character, If we turn to that Act, what we find is this, that the 2nd Section of the Act enacts that no person shall perform on a living animal any experiment calculated to give pain, except subject to restrictions contained in the Act. Then

in the 3rd Section you have the restrictions, and the restrictions are of this character:—

"'The experiment must be performed with the view to the advancement of discovery, physiological knowledge,' and so on 'The animal must be under the influence of an anæsthetic,' 'the animal must if the pain continue, be destroyed before it regains consciousness.' &c."

These restrictions express the views and desires of many persons at the time that measure was introduced, and those were the restrictions which if I remember aright were proposed by the Government. But in the very same clause containing those restrictions there is a certain number of provisos subsequently introduced, which repeal, or almost absolutely destroy, their power. I do not know that you could find any Statute containing a similar clause, in which you find a number of propositions in the first part of the Section, and those propositions practically repealed by what follows. What are these provisos? First of all, the experiments may be performed as an illustration of a lecture, if a certificate be given that they are necessary for the due instruction of the persons to be instructed. They may be performed without anæsthetics on a similar certificate being given that the presence of the anæsthetic would frustrate the objects of those experiments. They may be performed without the persons being under the obligation to kill the animal before it has regained consciousness, on a certificate that to kill it would destroy the value of the experiment. Well, now, I think the House cannot deny that these provisos absolutely repeal the force of the preceding part of the section, with the single exception of the restriction that the person performing the experiment is to be licensed by the Secretary of State. Under these circumstances, what I ask myself is this: What is the power, and what is the function of the Secretary of State? If you turn to the second Section of the Act you will find that the Secretary of State may insert in his license a provision that the place shall be registered in which the operations are to be performed. I should like to know from the Secretary of State whether he is in the habit of inserting any provisions in those licenses. I have no information upon the subject; I am not aware whether any information is before the House. I want to know?

THE HOME SECRETARY (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): There is Section 7.

*MR. STANSFELD: By Section 7, the Home Secretary is entitled to insert in his license that the place where the experiments are to be performed must be registered. What I want to know is, does the Secretary of State insert that provision? Well, then, another question is this. By Section 10, all registered places are to be inspected. I believe I understand correctly, therefore, that no places are inspected, except those now registered. But do I quite understand this correctly, that there are licensees who operate in places which are not registered? I am not aware. I see nothing in the Act which makes it impossible for the licensee to operate in an unregistered and uninspected place. Therefore, I assume that the licencees operate under any circumstances, and that practically speaking some places are not inspected at all. Well, then, has the Secretary of State really ever revoked a license for neglect of the conditions contained in the license granted by him to the experimenters, or have the experimenters ever reported to him the details, or has he directed those reports to be made. I find a statement made by Mr. Erichsen that only eight experiments involving pain were reported. I presume they were reported by the operator, and were not witnessed by himself. Only eight cases reported; that struck me as an extraordinary statement and a very unlikely figure. Turning to another part of the Report, I find there were 195 operations under certificates which dispensed with the necessity of killing the animals before the anæsthetic had ceased to operate. Therefore, it is evident that these animals in the 195 cases must have suffered, and that the eight cases cannot exhaust the number. I think I am entitled to ask the Secretary of State the actual number of real inspections, what is the nature of the inspections, and whether the places in which the experiments are conducted are all registered? I do not see how it can be so, and I want to know in what respect and in what manner the Secretary of State

finds himself able to exercise his discretion and fulfil his responsibility with regard to operations of this kind conducted in unregistered places? I will not carry the matter further at this time, but I hope the Secretary of State will be able to give us some information on these points.

*Mr. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield): The right hon. Gentleman must know that my right hon. Friend has exhausted his right of reply, and it is, therefore, my duty to answer him and other hon. Members. I am sorry he found it necessary to add such a large number of questions to the number already put, for they will necessitate my making longer observations than I had intended. It is true, Sir, that under the terms of the Act it is possible for experiments to be performed in unregistered places. There are only four licensees who enjoy that power, and I could give the right hon. Gentleman the names of the four Gentlemen who appear in the report, and I could give if necessary the reasons why they should be so privileged. The right hon. Gentleman asks also whether licenses had been revoked by the Secretary of State. I cannot speak to what was the practice before my right hon. Friend came into office, but I have in my mind the case of a gentleman who enjoyed the privilege of performing experiments in a private place, and whose license was revoked because of neglect of its conditions. Conditions are invariably attached to the licenses issued, alike in respect of the time, place and number of experiments. The number of inspections made appear on the face of the report. I wish to remind the House that the Government are coming for the first time to Parliament with the request to sanction the creation of a new and additional Inspector, so that if it be true that the inspection has been deficient in the past, we are to that extent doing our best to remedy the deficiency, and we hope to have a gentleman who will visit the various places, and so far as possible be present during the active performance of the experiments. We have had some remarks made as to the personal character of the inspection, and as to the honesty of the administration of the Act. I must, in justice to Mr. Erichsen, say that great and humane improvements have been introduced by him in the administration of the Act, and the hon. Gentleman will notice that far more information is given to Parliament than used to be the case in the time of his predecessor. You have the number of experiments made, and the number in which certificates are given, and therefore you can arrive at a comparison between different kinds of experiments. He has himself introduced some of the most humane conditions, such as that which is attached to inoculation experiments. This condition renders it imperative on the part of the experimenter to destroy an animal under anæsthetics in the event of pain being developed as a result of the operation. I must notice another fallacy. When the right hon. Gentleman supposes that the experiments reported in the list had been made under the certificate dispensing with the use of anæsthetics, I wish to point out that that is not necessarily a test of the number of painful experiments. An enormous majority of these experiments are simply inoculation experiments for pathological purposes, and many of them do not involve more pain than is necessary in making a puncture, while directly the morbid conditions induced by the puncture are set up, then there is an obligation to destroy the animal under anæsthetics. If I do not deal further with the allegations made, it is not my fault. I see the impatience of the House, but I do wish to say one thing before I sit down. The hon. Member for Sheffield and some of his Friends have alleged that this Act has not been properly administered, that the Inspector is not be believed, that the act is worthless because it is worked by men of science for the medical profession, and indeed he has not scrupled to add that certain Members of the medical profession are banded together for the purpose of suppressing the truth. The hon. member for Sheffield, in support of his case, has read out to the House sensational reports of experiments carried out, not in England, but in a foreign country. Moreover, in reading the account of certain other experiments performed in this country he has suppressed the paragraph in that account which states that the

experiments were carried out upon completely anæsthetized animals—animals under the influence of ether or chloroform. This shows that the statements of others besides medical men are not always to be received without scrutiny, and that others may be banded together for purposes no better than those attributed to these professional men. The Act, I submit, is being administered honestly, and improvements in its administration are being carried out.

The House divided:—Ayes 171; Noes 50.—(Division List, No. 121.)

Resolution agreed to.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (TONNAGE) BILL. [Bill 162.]

Order for Committee read.

An hon. MEMBER: I hope the President of the Board of Trade will give us some assurance that this Bill will be pushed forward as rapidly as possible.

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: I will do my best to get it forward.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I need scarcely remind the right hon. Gentleman of the replies he made to me on the 8th March and the 6th April last, in regard to the deputation that waited on the Board of Trade in reference to this Bill, and when he pleaded for help to enable him to get the Bill through. He admitted the urgency as well as the importance of the question, and pledged himself to use every exertion to pass the Bill. Now, I think it is obvious that if the House parts with the control of the Bill, and sends it to the Grand Committee on Trade, the little chance of its passing into law this year will be seriously jeopardized. The right hon. Gentleman says he will do his best. Well, his best is able to accomplish a great deal more than that, and all I ask him to do is to give us some proof of his earnest desire to get this Bill through, and to see that when the Grand Committee of Trade meet on Thursday next, the Bill goes before them. It is only the phraseology of the Bill that is complex. The matters at issue are few and are well understood, and I have no doubt that the Committee will be able to decide upon them in the course of a sitting or two, and the Bill be ready for progress in the House immediately after the holidays. I think it will not be a credit to this House if we fail to get the Bill through this Session.

Order for Committee, read and discharged.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

ADVANCE NOTES TO SEAMEN BILL. [No. 222.]

Read a second time and committed for Thursday.

HERRING FISHERY (SCOTLAND) BILL. [No. 224.]

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I understand that the hon. Member for Argyle has no objection to the proposal which I have put on the paper to extend his Bill to Ireland, and I hope the Government will be good enough to accept the Amendment, for the result of simply stopping trawling on the Scotch coast will be to drive the steam trawlers to Ireland. The Secretary of State for Scotland well knows that when he stopped steam trawlers in the North of Scotland, they came down to the Clyde, and now if he prohibits it altogether in Scotland, he will simply stop the mischief done by these plunderers of the deep in one part of the country and send them to another part. I therefore beg to move that the Bill be re-committed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be recommitted in respect of Clauses 1, 2 and 6."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think we can do this without further inquiry. The hon. and learned Gentleman is aware that there have been investigations into cases of alleged injury done by trawling, and after careful inquiry the allegations were found to be without foundation. It was decided that the injury to the spawn beds was practically *nil*, and the amount of premature fish destroyed was so trifling as not to be worth consideration, while any injury that was done was owing to the fishermen's own fault. When I was

Secretary for Scotland, I brought in a Bill restricting the action of trawlers; but I desire to point out to the hon. and learned Gentleman that the conditions of the law in Scotland and in Ireland vary. In Scotland, as the law at present stands, there is no power to stop trawling. The only power which the Secretary for Scotland has is to limit it for the purposes of carrying on scientific investigations; but unless I misunderstand the character of the Irish Law, there the Fishery Boards have absolute power to stop trawling wherever it does damage; and I believe I am right in saying that if the Boards fail to take action the fishermen in any district have a right to move the Privy Council to set them in motion. Therefore, the grievance in Ireland is not in any sense of the same character as the grievance in Scotland; and the effect of the hon. and learned Gentleman's Amendment would be to alter the presumption rather than the actual law. The Bill has now reached a very advanced stage.

MR. HEALY: Yes, through our concessions.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no doubt that the hon. and learned Gentleman has helped us to get it forward, and I was referring to the fact in order to point out that it might be deferred for a few days without in the least endangering its chances of passing this Session. I cannot assent to the Amendment without first consulting the Fishery Board on the matter. I have already had one Report from them which has not satisfied me, and I should like to further consider the matter before I give a decision as to the Amendment.

*MR. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman has not seen his way to consent to the recommittal of the Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not dissent from it. I prefer to defer it.

*MR. MARJORIBANKS: Then I am sorry he has not seen his way to assent to it now. As far as I am able to judge, the same conditions apply alike all round the coasts of Great Britain, and if it is detrimental to the fishing interest to permit trawling within the three miles limit of the coast of Scotland, it is equally detrimental within the three miles limit of the coasts of England and Ireland. I must also dissent from the opinion the right hon. Gentleman has expressed in regard to the Fishery Board. I maintain that the Scotch Fishery Board have most complete power to prohibit trawling all round the coasts of Scotland, not merely for the purposes of scientific investigation, but for any purpose whatsoever. I know this is a matter as to which discussion has arisen. I still believe that the fact of prohibiting trawling within the three miles limit can do, and will do, very little harm indeed to trawlers, while it will do a great deal towards promoting the fishery supply of the kingdom, and also enabling the smaller and poorer class of fishermen to prosecute their calling to the greatest possible advantage. I believe this Act may be most beneficially applied both to Scotland and to Ireland, and I hope the Government will see their way so to extend it at no distant date. I trust, too, they will undertake to favourably consider this Amendment.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I think the best plan will be for me to ask leave to withdraw the Amendment, in order that the right hon. Gentleman may have an opportunity of consulting the Irish Fishery Board, although I entertain no hope that they will accept the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Consideration, as amended, deferred till Monday next.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL. [No. 225].

As amended, considered,

And it being one of the clock, further proceedings on consideration, as amended, stood adjourned till this day.

MR. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 6.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MAY 29.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 21*st May*, 1889.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL. (No. 78.)

NATIONAL DEBT BILL. (No. 79.)

NAVAL DEFENCE BILL. (No. 80.)

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª, and to be printed.

SAINT GILES RESTORATION (SCOTLAND) ACT AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 40.)

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

LARCENY ACT, 1861, AMENDMENT (USE OF FIREARMS) BILL. (No. 82.)

TOWN POLICE CLAUSES ACT (1847) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 83.)

Reported from the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., with Amendments: The Report thereof received; and Bills re-committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next; and to printed as amended.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 21*st May*, 1889.

EAST INDIA (FACTORY ACT).

Ordered—

"Address for copies of further correspondence relating to the amendment of the India Factories Act of 1881 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 124, of Session 1889)."—(*Mr. James Maclean*).

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—ASSAULTS BY THE POLICE.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the report in the *Cork Examiner*, of the 7th instant, with reference to an action tried on Saturday before County Court Judge Anderson and a jury, at the suit of James Cullinan, of Bansha, against James Griffin, Sergeant of the Royal Irish Constabulary, in which Mr. Cullinan sought damages, £50, for an assault by a constabulary man, under the following circumstances: Dr. Tanner, M.P., having been arrested on the night of the 1st March, was brought over in custody of policemen, and, on arrival at the Limerick Junction, was joined by Mr. John Cullinan, who called for a cheer for the Member for Mid Cork. The defendant, who happened to be on the platform at the time, lifted his truncheon and dealt Mr. Cullinan a blow on the head for his demand. There was no crowd, and no disturbance of any kind. The facts were plain, and uncontradicted, and the jury found for

the plaintiff, with £5 damages, and costs; and, whether the foregoing statement is substantially correct; and, if so, whether the Constabulary Authorities have taken any notice, or intend to take any notice, of the conduct of Sergeant Griffin?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The statements in the *Cork Examiner* appeared to be in material respects inaccurate and misleading. It would, however, be improper for him to discuss the case which was *sub judice*, the Police Sergeant having lodged an appeal.

ZULULAND—SOMHLOLO'S CASE.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay a copy of the record and evidence in Somhlolo's case upon the Table; and, whether he will lay a copy of the Judge's notes and official shorthand notes (if any was taken) of the evidence in the cases of Dinizulu, Undabuko, and Ishingana upon the Table as soon as received?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxeth): The Secretary of State proposes to lay the Despatches in this case on the Table of the House; and, with regard to the evidence, he thinks it may sufficiently meet the requirements of hon. Members if 50 copies of it are placed in the Library, as it is very voluminous. No undertaking can be given with regard to the Judge's and shorthand notes.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): When shall we get the Zululand Papers, which were promised some time ago?

BARON H. DE WORMS: I cannot say exactly. They will be given as soon as possible.

THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention has been drawn to the fact that a Government Bill has been passed into law, entitled "The Public Servants (Liabilities) Ordinance, 1889" (subject to the Imperial assent), relating to the Straits Settlements, of which the scope is to preclude "legal proceedings or process of every description other than criminal, including proceedings in bankruptcy, being maintained against a public servant in receipt of less than 150 dollars per month"; whether the attention of the Secretary of State has been called to the speech of the Attorney General when introducing the Bill; and whether the Government will cause an inquiry to be made as to the condition of the Department of the Public Service in the Settlements to which the Bill relates?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The Secretary is aware that a Bill of the character described by the hon. Member has been introduced into the Legislature of the Straits Settlements with the object of preventing public servants in receipt of a salary not exceeding 150 dollars a month from getting into the power of money-lenders. He has seen a report of the speech of the Attorney General referred to; and, when the Ordinance is sent Home for Her Majesty's confirmation, he will consider whether there is a necessity for such an inquiry as the hon. Member suggests.

IRELAND—NATIONAL LEAGUE MEETINGS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, considering that Chief Baron Palles, in delivering Judgment on a case stated on the conviction and sentence to six months' imprisonment with hard labour of T. J. Brown, M. Collins, and C. M'Auliffe for attending a meeting of the suppressed branch of the National League, held that there was no sufficient evidence on which to ground a conviction, he has considered if the case is one for the exercise of the prerogative of mercy?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As far as the question relates to the Chief Baron's Judgment I have not yet received the necessary information from Ireland. But as regards the prisoners, if they or their friends are of opinion that there is any ground for suggesting the exercise of the prerogative of mercy, they should follow the usual course of presenting a memorial to the Lord Lieutenant.

MR. BRADLAUGH: In the present strained state of things in Ireland, does the right hon. Gentleman consider it necessary to wait for action on the part

of these unfortunate men, after such an expression of opinion on the part of an eminent Judge?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If these persons do not care to move in the matter—even if the hon. Member's version is correct, but which I am not prepared to admit—their friends have power to take the necessary steps.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): The point of the hon. Member's question is whether Captain Segrave was the Magistrate who convicted these men, and did Chief Baron Pallas differ from the conclusion at which Captain Segrave arrived? As the Government have dismissed Captain Segrave in circumstances of great infamy, why do not the Government liberate these men?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I can hardly assent to the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman, but any facts relative to the exercise of the prerogative of mercy should be brought forward in a memorial to the Lord Lieutenant.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION BILL.

MR. WHITLEY (Liverpool, Everton) I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether Her Majesty's Government propose to insert any Amendments in the Technical Education Bill before the House to protect the interests of voluntary schools, which are at present unprovided for in the Bill?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): This Bill was read a second time late on Wednesday, May 8th, as hon. Members were leaving the House. I then rose to state that Her Majesty's Government could only accept the Second Reading of the Bill on the express understanding that Amendments protecting the interests of voluntary schools should be inserted in Committee.

IRELAND—DISTRICT INSPECTOR MARKHAM.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland if he can now state whether the Court Martial on D. J. Markham was open to the Press and public; and, whether the evidence will be laid upon the Table?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is the fact that the inquiry in the case of District Inspector Markham was open to the Press and to the public. The Government will, under no circumstances, consent to lay the Report upon the Table of the House. But the hon. Gentleman does not ask for that; he asks for the evidence. I believe that there was no official shorthand note taken. If there was I shall have no objection to lay it on the Table. I will inquire into the matter.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I am obliged to the right hon. Gentleman. We do not care for the Report, but will the finding accompany the evidence?

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): Is it not the fact that in ordinary military Courts Martial it is customary to supply a copy of the finding to any one who appears for it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This has been incorrectly described as a Court Martial. If the hon. Member will put a notice of his question down upon the Paper I will inquire into the matter.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the finding upon which this Gentleman was reduced in rank will accompany the evidence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If it is possible I will lay the evidence upon the Table, and of course it will include the finding.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): In the event of the evidence not having been taken in shorthand, will the right hon. Gentleman lay a copy of the long hand notes upon the table?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will consider the matter.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the articles of the Sugar Convention before its signature, and the arrangements for carrying it into effect, were settled in official communication with and the approval of the Department of the Board of Trade; and whether the correspondence of the Board of Trade relating thereto will be presented to Parliament?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): My right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury stated, in reply to a question which was asked him by the hon. Member for Leicester on the 21st

of March, that the negotiations with foreign countries on the subject of this Convention were conducted according to usual practice by the Foreign Office, and that any communications from the Board of Trade on the subject are included in the Papers which have already been presented. I cannot add anything to this reply.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Are the negotiations in the Conference now going on with reference to certificates of origin and so forth carried on in communication with the Board of Trade?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: They are carried on by the Foreign Office in accordance with the usual custom.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Is it not the practice where any commercial question is involved, as in the case of the Spanish Treaty in reference to wine, to consult not only the Foreign Office and the Treasury, but the Board of Trade, are all regularly consulted in every stage of the transaction?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Of course, if the Foreign Office, which conducts these negotiations, desires information or opinions upon any particular point, the Department concerned would be applied to. In this case, I believe, the Customs are being consulted.

MR. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid-Lothian): Do I understand from the right hon. Gentleman that questions affecting the subject of negotiations with foreign Powers have their origin in the Foreign Office, and that the Board of Trade has nothing to say unless the Foreign Office on some particular point sees occasion to consult the Board of Trade? That certainly is an entire revolution in the ancient practice of Government in my recollection and to which I can speak from personal experience. The Board of Trade advised the Foreign Office and the Foreign Office acted on the advice of the Board of Trade.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I think that was before the institution of the Commercial Department, of the Foreign Office, and that the institution of that Department may have led to a change.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, under the Convention, sugar being merchandize exported from countries which do not themselves produce sugar or give bounties, and which are not parties to the Convention, will be admitted freely to this country, or whether such sugar will be excluded if it can be proved that at some period or other it had been derived from a bounty-giving country; in the latter case, in what manner will the investigation of the origin of the sugar be conducted, and by what authority will the question of exclusion of each cargo be decided; and was this question of the treatment of the export of such countries discussed and determined in the Conference before the Convention was signed, and what measures have been taken to ascertain whether such countries, being outside the Convention, recognize the proposed exclusion as consistent with our Commercial Treaties?

BARON H. DE WORMS: As regards the first two paragraphs of the right hon. Gentleman's question, which are in substance identical with the question put by him to the President of Board of Trade on Thursday last, I can only refer to the answer then given by my right hon. Friend, to which I have nothing to add. With regard to the last paragraph of the question, it is obviously impossible for me now to say if any or what countries may be outside the Convention at the time of its coming into force in September, 1891. It was in view of the contingency contemplated in the question that the Conference provided, under Article 6, for the appointment of a permanent bureau to inquire and decide, by the action of a Conference of all the Signatory Powers specially convened for the purpose, the joint action that might be required to give full effect to the Convention.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman refuses to answer my two first questions, because he says they have been answered already by the President of the Board of Trade. When I put the same questions to the President of the Board of Trade, he said that he could not answer them as he was not present at the Conference, and was not acquainted with the circumstances. Therefore, I put the question to the Under Secretary, because he was present at the Conference, and is presumably acquainted with the facts of the case.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am speaking simply from recollection, but I think that was not my answer. I stated on Thursday, in reference to another point,

that I was not present at the Conference, and, therefore, could not say if it discussed a particular matter. My general answer to the right hon. Gentleman was that the matter would have to be considered by an International Tribunal at which Great Britain would be represented, and, pending its consideration, it is impossible for the Government to express an opinion upon the subject.

SIR W. HARCOURT: It is difficult to discover what Department of the Government has to do with this Convention. I have put these questions to each head of a Department in turn without getting an answer. The question I want to ask is this:—whether, under the Convention, sugar being merchandize exported from countries which do not themselves produce sugar, or give bounties, and which are no parties to the Convention, will be admitted freely to this country, or whether such sugar will be excluded, if it can be proved that at some period or other it had been derived from a bounty-giving country? I have received no answer to that question, and I must beg for an answer from somebody. I also asked in the latter case, in what manner will the investigation of the origin of the sugar be conducted, and by what authority will the question of exclusion of each cargo be decided? To that question also I have received no answer.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The right hon. Gentleman has had an answer—that the Government do not consider it consistent with their duty, or in the interests of the public service, to give the information he wants. [MR. CONYBEARE, Cornwall, Camborne: Hear, hear.] Perhaps the hon. Member for Camborne does not appreciate the difficulties of dealing with foreign countries.

MR. CONYBEARE: Quite as much as you do.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The British Government will be represented at the International Tribunal which will have to settle these matters, and pending their settlement the Government decline to be led into any expression of their opinions with regard to them.

MR. GLADSTONE: I wish to know if I understand rightly the answer which has been given. The President of the Board of Trade says that if a question should arise as to our receiving sugar from such countries as are named in the question of my right hon. Friend, the matter would have to be decided by a tribunal composed of representatives of the signatory Powers. If that is so, does it not follow that this tribunal of the foreign Powers on which we are to have a voice is to decide certain questions not only with respect to our commerce with those Powers, but also with respect to our commerce with other Powers outside?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Certainly not. The decisions at which the tribunal will arrive will afterwards, according to the Convention, be submitted to the respective Governments who are parties to it.

MR. GLADSTONE: My point is this, that the Powers which are parties to the Convention will be called upon to decide upon questions of trade between this country and other Powers.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: That no doubt represents the view which the right hon. Gentleman has arrived at. The interpretation of the whole Convention is obviously a question of argument.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I will put the case not in the form of an argument, but in the form of a question. Supposing the International Commission decides that we are not to take sugar from Denmark, or any Power not within the Convention, shall we be obliged to refuse the sugar of Denmark, although we may differ from that decision, in consequence of the International Commission determining that we shall not take that sugar?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I decline to answer a hypothetical question.

TITHE DISTRAINTS IN CARDIGANSHIRE.

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to announcements made in the *Cambrian News* and other newspapers that the military are to be employed at the forthcoming sales under tithe destraints in Cardiganshire; whether he has received any communications on the subject; and whether anything has occured during the recent visit of Mr. Stevens to North Pembrokeshire and the adjacent dis-

tricts to justify such employment of troops?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I was informed by the Chief Constable of Cardiganshire on the 14th inst. that he proposed to apply for a force of cavalry to aid the civil power in protecting the agent to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and his men whilst removing goods received under warrants of distress from some 18 or 20 farms in the parish of Penbryn to the railway station at Cardigan. As these farms are situated at long distances from Cardigan, only one journey a day can possibly be performed, and the Chief Constable is unable to provide men from his own or the neighbouring forces for so great a length of time as this duty will require. Under these circumstances, and not, as I understand, in consequence of anything that has recently occurred in North Pembrokeshire, after consulting the Senior Magistrate of the district, he decided to apply for an escort of cavalry.

MR. B. ROWLANDS: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if the information he has received conveyed to him the fact that the recent visits of the agents of the tithe owners were entirely peaceable, that the Chief Constable was attended only by one man, and that they were altogether unmolested. Why then should the military be employed? If no police are required, why are the military necessary?

MR. MATTHEWS: I believe that in some cases the absence of the police and military has been eminently successful, and I have recommended that course to be followed wherever it can be safely done. But in this particular case the Chief Constable came to the conclusion that he required an escort.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire): In this very remarkable state of things I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, within the last few weeks, there has been any disturbance whatever, and whether the police have been put to any trouble at any of these sales? If that is so, why is he going to employ the military, seeing that the police themselves have had nothing whatever to do?

MR. MATTHEWS: I must ask for notice of that question.

INDIA—CONTRACTS WITH OASTLER AND PALMER.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India (1) what contracts have been made with the firm of Oastler and Palmer since the the firm of Ross and Company were struck off the list of Government contractors; (2) whether he is aware that Messrs. Oastler and Palmer and Messrs. Ross and Company are only different names of the same firm, both being of Grange-road, Bermondsey; and, (3) by whom were those contracts given to Messrs. Oastler and Palmer; by whose recommendation; and after what form of competition?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): (1) Thirteen contracts have been made, one for buff hides for £3,878, and 12 for accoutrements, belting, harness materials, &c., averageing £73 each. (2) I stated last week that Messrs. Oastler and Palmer were believed to be connected with Messrs. Ross & Co., and that inquiries were being made into the matter. These enquiries are still in progress. (3) The contracts were given by the Secretary of State for India in Council after limited completion amongst selected firms

MR. HANBURY: Does the Director of Army Contracts in any way negotiate these contracts, or has he anything to do with them?

SIR J. GORST: No, Sir.

IRELAND—PRISON TREATMENT OF MEMBERS.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. John O'Connor, M.P., and other prisoners under the Coercion Act in Tullamore Goal, after having been placed at exercise together, were, by the order of the Governor, acting as he stated, upon instructions from the Irish Prisons Board, put to solitary exercise, in disregard of their protest, and their claim to exercise together according to their class; whether one of the new Prison Rules leaves discretion in this regard to the Governor or Surgeon of the prison; how it has happened in this case that the exercise of the Governor's discretion has been overruled; and whether Coercion Act

prisoners will be permitted to exercise together as other prisoners are?

SIR W. FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) asked a question to a simular effect.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary whether complaints have reached him that Mr. Finucane, the hon. Member for East Limerick, although one of the persons incriminated at the Special Commission, has not been supplied with books, writing materials, and papers requisite to preparation of his defence; and if this allegation be correct, whether he will order their immediate and regular supply to the imprisoned Gentleman?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked that the questions should be postponed until Thursday, as he was not in a position to reply to them at that moment.

THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I wish to ask the First Commissioner of Works what provision the Government are prepared to make for the development of the National Gallery should the necessity for increased accommodation be proved, in the event of the space now available for the purpose at Hemming's Row being assigned as the site of the promised National Portrait Gallery?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, University of Dublin): I am authorized to say that, in the event of a necessity arising for the enlargement of the National Gallery, the Government would provide a site for such enlargement in the space now occupied by the St. George's Barrack-yard.

THE METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the Agenda Paper of the Metropolitan Asylums Board on Saturday last comprised a Report of the Committee for General Purposes, in which the following passage occurred:—

"Pursuant to reference from the Board of the 27th March last your Committee have had under consideration the communication from the Local Government Board, in which they state that they are unable to assent to the proposed payment of £1,000 to Dr. M'Kellar, on the termination of his appointment as Medical Superintendent of the South Western Hospitals. Since the receipt of the Local Government Board's communication, however, the Chairman of the Board, at the request of your Committee, has had an interview with the President of the Local Government Board thereon, and, in view of what transpired at that interview, and having regard to all the circumstances of the case, your Committee recommend that application be made to the Local Government Board for their sanction to the payment of the sum of £500 to Dr. M'Kellar, on the termination of his appointment."

Whether he will state to the House what transpired at the interview referred to; and, whether he proposes to sanction the payment of £500 to Dr. M'Kellar; and, if so, what circumstances have induced him to alter his former decision?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The General Purposes Committee of the Metropolitan Asylums Board made a Report to the effect of that stated by the hon. Member, and I have to-day received a communication informing me that the Report was adopted at the meeting of the managers on Saturday last. It is the case that I had an interview with the Chairman of the Managers, and that, having regard to the circumstances connected with the proposal to determine the appointment of Dr. M'Kellar after a service of more than 17 years, I informed the Chairman that if the Managers should propose to award him a sum not exceeding his salary and emoluments for one year the proposal would receive favourable consideration. It is my intention to sanction the payment proposed. My previous decision had reference to a sum of £1000, not £500.

MR. PICKERSGILL: May I ask whether the reply given to me on the 29th of March did not go to the principle as well as to the amount of the grant, because I asked the right hon. Gentleman under what statutory authority the Asylums Board made this grant?

*MR. RITCHIE: It was under no statutory authority; but they have power to award a sum in remuneration in a case of this kind, and they have frequently exercised it before with the sanction of the Local Government Board. But I considered the payment of £1,000 quite too much, and therefore declined to sanction it. The payment of one year's salary appeared to me to

be not unnecessarily large to a gentleman who had performed valuable services for the long period of 17 years.

MR. PICKERSGILL: Was not the former decision based on the principle of the demand?

*MR. RITCHIE: It was based, on my part, on the belief that the sum was a great deal too large.

COUNTY RATES AND POOR RATES IN SCOTLAND.

MR. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lanarkshire, N.E.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate when the Returns of County Rates and Poor Rates in Scotland will be in the hands of Members; and, whether they will be delivered in time for the discussion on the Second Reading of the Local Government Bills?

SIR G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): In the case of the English Local Government Bill, a Return was laid on the Table giving the amount of the License Duty and the amount of the Parliamentary Grant that was sacrificed. I should like to know if any similar Return will be laid on the Table in regard to the Scotch Bill.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): In reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I may say that I think we have the materials for such a Return, and if so, it will be laid on the Table of the House. In reply to the question of the hon. Member for Lanarkshire (Mr. D. Crawford), I have to inform him that the Return will be in the hands of the printer to-morrow, and will be circulated as soon as possible.

THE EX-KHEDIVE ISMAIL.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith District): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Her Majesty's Government are aware that when the mission of the Judge Advocate General to Egypt, in connection with the claims of the Ex-Khedive Ismail, was sanctioned, his services were to be remunerated by a percentage on the amount which he succeeded in obtaining from the Egyptian Government; whether their attention has been called to the current statement that the Commission actually received by the Judge Advocate General amounted to £35,000; and, if it is a fact that an action has been commenced in the Egyptian Courts against the Judge Advocate General for the restitution of a portion of this sum on the ground of his having acted *ultra vires*?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): Her Majesty's Government are not cognizant of the arrangements entered into between the ex-Khedive Ismail and Sir W. Marriott, and they know nothing of any action having been taken in the Egyptian Courts.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON: Can the First Lord inform the House of the net financial result to the Egyptian Government of the arrangement concluded between Sir E. Vincent and the Judge Advocate General on the subject of the claims of the Ex-Khedive Ismail and of his family?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have already replied to that question. If the hon. Gentleman will turn to No. 5 of the Egyptian Papers, 1888, he will obtain full information on the subject.

MINING ROYALTIES COMMISSION.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he intends to lay before the House the terms of the reference to the Royal Commission on Mining Royalties and the names of the proposed Commissioners; whether it is true as reported that he refuses to include in the inquiry the china clay industry of Cornwall; and, if so, can he state the reason for his refusal; and, whether he is aware that this industry is of vital consequence to several important manufacturing industries in Lancashire and elsewhere, which suffer from the payment of royalties?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have already stated generally the terms of reference to the proposed Royal Commission on Mining Royalties, and the actual reference shall be given as soon as the Commission has been selected. The Government have carefully considered the proposal to include in the inquiry other materials than minerals, and they are of opinion that the labours of the Commission will be sufficiently onerous without extending the scope of the inquiry.

ISSUE OF NOTES BY OUNTRY BANKERS.

MR. ATKINSON (Boston): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he

has any intention of introducing a measure this Session dealing with the issue of notes by country bankers; if so, what will be the purport of such measure?

LIGHT GOLD.

MR. ATKINSON had also given notice of the following question: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he intends to bring in any measure dealing with the expense of light gold (wear and tear) this Session; and, if so, what the purport of the measure will be?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I will answer the two questions of the hon. Member together. The observations which I made in my Budget speech on the subject of the gold currency and the circulation generally will have indicated to the House that I contemplate a somewhat large measure dealing with several important questions together. I am sorry to say that the period of the Session at which we have arrived warns me that there would be but little, if any, chance of carrying such a large measure, which would necessarily and properly involve much examination and discussion on the part of the House. But I am considering whether, without prejudice to such a larger measure, I could make at least a commencement with the re-coining of light sovereigns to a limited extent. It is possible that such a commencement might afford some valuable experience, and I should be glad if I should see my way to passing a measure of that kind, excluding controversial points.

INDIA — GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHMENTS AT SIMLA AND CALCUTTA.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the recommendations of the Finance Committee (India) 1886 as to the transfer of the official establishments of the Government of India from Calcutta to Simla annually, and from Simla to Calcutta, showing a present annual saving of Rs. 2,38,730, and a prospective saving of Rs. 2,98,365, in one of two schemes suggested, and a saving of Rs. 2,89,510 and Rs. 3,83,830 respectively in the other scheme, have been carried out; and, if not, if he will state the reasons of the Government for not acting on this recommendation?

*SIR J. GORST: The recommendations of the Finance Committee have been generally approved by the Secretary of State, and in accordance with his instructions the Government of India is now engaged in arranging the details, by which effect will be given to these recommendations.

THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, is it true that there are in the Royal Irish Academy over 100 volumes of MS. by the late Professors John O'Donovan and Eugene O'Curry, the celebrated Irish scholars, containing a topographical, archæological, and historical account of every Irish county; that these were prepared for the Ordnance Survey Department, but that, except the volume relating to Derry, none of the others have been printed; and, as they contain matter of the greatest interest, which is now practically inaccessible, and which could never again be collected if any of the volumes were lost or destroyed, will the Government consider the question of printing them, and what would this cost.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): There are, I understand, about 100 volumes of MSS. of the character referred to by the hon. and learned Member, which have been entrusted to the care of the Royal Irish Academy, in addition to some volumes deposited at the Ordnance Survey Depôt. I believe that the Royal Irish Academy affords every facility for consulting the volumes in its charge, and, apart from the question of expense, it would be necessary to consult that body before the question of printing any of the MSS. could be entertained.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Has the hon. Gentleman any objection to communicate with the Royal Irish Academy on the subject, and ascertain what would be the expense of printing these documents?

*MR. JACKSON: I have made some inquiry, and I understand that there is a great difference of opinion as to whether, in the event of it being desirable to print any of them, it would be at all desirable to print the whole. I am told that is a matter which will require very great consideration.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to give notice that I will raise the question in this House.

THE ORDERS TO THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

MR. PICKERSGILL asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will grant, as an unopposed return, the collected orders to the Metropolitan Police, from a copy of which in his possession a portion was quoted as basis of an answer to a question on Friday last?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir; I am unable to comply with this request. Police orders are treated as confidential, and it would be injurious to the service to lay them all on the Table of the House. The order quoted last Friday is only one of a large number issued from time to time, and there is no objection to laying that particular order on the Table if the hon. Member thinks the expense worth incurring.

MR. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I wish to ask you, Sir, whether, as a matter of fact, you did not rule on the 26th February last that the whole of a document, when quoted, should be produced; and whether the present document does not come under that ruling?

*MR. SPEAKER: A confidential police document has always been excepted from the rule. I have never laid it down that all communications referred to in debate shall be laid on the Table of the House. I think that what I alluded to was a particular communication which had been made to a Minister.

MR. MATTHEWS: I have already stated that if it is considered worth while to incur the expense of printing it, the order referred to shall be laid upon the Table.

MR. STUART: The answer which the right hon. Gentleman gave on the former occasion was based on a certain portion of a document, and the rest of the document may be necessary in order to enable us to understand the whole. The confidential character of the document was not the point I raised. If, however, you rule, Sir, that it is a confidential document, of course, I bow.

*MR. SPEAKER: It does not follow that the whole of a document is of a confidential nature. Some portion of it may be of a confidential nature, which it is undesirable to give to the House.

MR. STUART: I wish to ask the Home Secretary if the document is regarded as a confidential document, and in what it differs essentially from police orders in other towns?

MR. MATTHEWS: The question put to me was whether I would grant as an unopposed return the collected orders to the Metropolitan Police, from a copy of which in my possession a portion was quoted as the basis of an answer to a question on Friday last. It must be recollected that there are a vast number of orders, and that some of them are entirely of a confidential character.

MR. STUART: I beg to give notice, I will bring forward this matter upon the Police Vote.

INDIAN UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONS.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kentington, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if he will state the exact reasons assigned for the payment of a certain number of Indian Uncovenanted Service pensions in sterling, while the great bulk of such pensions (especially those of very small amount) are paid in rupees; and if he will state the date on which the first pension payable in England in rupees was granted to any Indian Uncovenanted Civil Servant?

SIR. J. GORST: Of the 15 pensions paid in sterling, four are legal pensions for which a special scale in sterling was sanctioned in 1867; three were exceptional pensions granted on abolition of office; four were specially granted for good service apart from pension rules in the years 1863, '68, '69, '73; four were pensions properly payable in rupees, but were erroneously awarded in sterling in India. The first payment in London at the official rate of exchange of an Indian rupee pension was on August 1st, 1863.

THE FRESCOES IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

COLONEL NOLAN: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if, until a recent date, Members of the House of Commons were permitted to introduce strangers into the Committee Room devoted to the joint use of the Commons and the Peers, for the purposes of conferring on Public Bills, which room contains valu-

able and costly frescoes, which the constituents of Members, who have paid for these frescoes, may naturally desire to view; if a recent rule of the Peers prohibits Members of the House of Commons from introducing strangers to view these frescoes, while still allowing a Peer this privilege; and, if a similar restriction has within the last two years been placed on entrance to the rooms containing the frescoes of Waterloo and Trafalgar?

MR. PLUNKET: I am informed that in 1870, when the old Conference Room was converted into the present House of Commons Dining Room, the room in the House of Lords which contains the frescoe of Moses was designated as a temporary Conference Room, while Committee Room E was being built as the permanent Conference Room. The Members' privilege of introducing strangers to the Peers' Robing Room was withdrawn about January, 1888, by the Lord Great Chamberlain, for the greater security of the building. The Members' privilege of introducing strangers to the Prince's Chamber and Royal Gallery when the House of Lords was sitting was withdrawn at the same time. Members have not, however, been prohibited themselves from having access to the room during the sitting of the House.

COLONEL NOLAN: At what time are strangers introduced by Members of this house allowed to inspect these frescoes?

MR. PLUNKET: I will ascertain.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As nobody can see them, will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of removing them from the House of Lords?

No answer was given to this question.

THE WELSH SUNDAY CLOSING COMMISSION.

MR. B. ROWLANDS: I beg to ask the Home Secretary if he will consider whether it is not desirable to place upon the Welsh Sunday Closing Commission two Members who are able to speak the Welsh language. Such a step would secure the confidence of the Welsh speaking population of Wales. I ask this question because I have received information that the proposed constitution of the Commission has been the cause of much disappointment in the principal districts of Wales. The only Welsh Member of Parliament upon it is one of the two Welsh Members who voted against this particular Bill.

MR. MATTHEWS: The principle I adopted in selecting the Members to serve on the Commission was to select one partizan from each side and three Members who were perfectly impartial and not committed in any way. I, however, found it almost impossible to get more than three gentlemen of eminence to serve. One of the gentlemen selected is a Welsh County Court Judge who was not unacquainted with the Welsh language, and the Secretary is a Welshman thoroughly acquainted with the language. I do not believe that the composition of the Commission will be regarded with anything like general dissatisfaction.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Will the Commission be a stationary or a rotatory one?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have communicated to the Chairman of that Commission that it will probably be desirable to go from place to place, but that will be within the discretion of the Commissioners themselves.

THE FIELD CLUB PROSECUTION.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy,): I beg to ask whether the prosecution of gamblers at the Field Club was a Government prosecution, and whether Mr. St. John Wontner, on the part of the Government, only pressed the prosecution against the menials and declined to cross-examine the noble Lords and gentlemen on the ground that the punishment could only be very small, and that although the Act made a special provision that they should be examined, he did not want to pillory them.

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no official information on the subject to which the hon. Member alludes, and therefore notice had better be given of the question.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I will ask a question at another time, but I beg to give notice that I intend to call attention to the matter in Committee of Supply.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask whether after the Whitsuntide holidays more time will be given for the Notices of Bills of private Members. At present the Government occupy the whole of

the time up to 12 o'clock and private Members have no opportunity of bringing forward anything.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: It would be impossible to devise rules that would not press inconveniently in some directions. I regret that private Members were afforded no opportunity of bringing their business forward.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The same thing happened on Thursday.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am sure the hon. and learned Gentleman will see that if we are to make progress with public business every possible contingency cannot be foreseen and guarded against.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: In view of the fact that the Government are constantly making appeals to us to facilitate the progress of public business, and will in return afford no facilities to us, all I can say is that in future I will take care not to accede to their appeals.

MOTIONS.

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SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Atkinson, Bill to limit the duration of Speeches in Parliament, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Atkinson and Sir Roper Lethbridge.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 239.]

BUILDINGS (METROPOLIS) BILL.

On motion of Mr. Whitmore, Bill to restrict the Height of Buildings in the Metropolis, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Tatterton Egerton, Mr. Lawson, and Mr. Labouchere.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 240.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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NATIONAL DEBT BILL. (No. 219.)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Sir W. HARCOURT (Derby): Before this Bill passes I wish to make one or two remarks upon it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer objected the other day to my describing his financial operations as a disparagement and impeachment of the Sinking Fund. I do not quite understand the ground on which he based his objection. The first clause of this Bill states that the amount of the permanent annual charge for the National Debt during the current and every subsequent financial year shall be the sum of £25,000,000, and that £25,000,000 shall be substituted for £26,000,000 in Section 1 of the Sinking Fund Act of 1875, as amended by Section 2 of the National Debt and Local Loans Act, 1887. Consequently, on the face of it, it is a modification of the Sinking Funds Acts of 1875 and 1887, and a reduction of the amount applicable under those Acts to the liquidation of the National Debt. Many members will remember the production of the plan for the reduction of the National Debt by Sir Stafford Northcote in 1875. It was considered one of the great achievements of the Conservative Party to have established for ever a fund of £28,000,000 for the purpose of the reduction of the National Debt. The way in which it was to operate was this. As everybody knows, the actual interest due upon the Debt is less than £28,000,000. The amount due upon the interest of the Debt, and of course I include that upon the terminal annuities, is considerably less than £28,000,000. Therefore the difference between £28,000,000 and the sum necessary to discharge the public liabilities under the Debt was to be the Sinking Fund for the future reduction of the Debt. Sir Stafford Northcote established the margin between this sum of £28,000,000 and the interest due on the debt as a perpetual Sinking Fund; and in the Act of 1875 it was provided that during every financial year £28,000,000 should be set aside for that purpose. Now of course the extent of the Sinking Fund, varied according to the amount of interest which had to be paid on the Debt. The plan of Sir S. Northcote was not that a particular sum should be annually set aside, but that the actual sum of £28,000,000 should be appropriated, so that as the interest on the Debt from time to time became less, so the margin constituting the Sinking Fund should become greater. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told us the other day that this was a question only of the interest to be paid. With great submission I maintain that that is not so at all. Sir S. Northcote did not mean that as the Debt was diminished the Sinking Fund should also be lessened; he meant that if in his day the necessary interest on the Debt was £23,000,000, the Sinking

Fund should be £5,000,000; that if, by the reduction of the Debt, the necessary interest on the Debt became £20,000,000, then the Sinking Fund should be £8,000,000; and that if it became £18,000,000 the Sinking Fund should be £10,000,000. That was the plan contemplated by Sir S. Northcote, and there were great rejoicings in the Conservative Party that this permanent and ever-increasing Sinking Fund was to go up proportionately with the reduction of the National Debt. I remember it was remarked at the time that it was produced at a period when it was incapable of being immediately applied, but in subsequent years it did come into operation. Later, in 1885 and 1886, no doubt it was necessary temporarily to suspend its operation in consequence of great financial pressure; but this will not be a temporary suspension. It has happened to the present Chancellor of the Exchequer twice permanently to break down the plan of Sir S. Northcote. In the Act of 1887 the right hon. Gentleman permanently altered the figure of £28,000,000 to £26,000,000. That was at a time when he had a surplus revenue, and when there was no financial pressure at all. Now he has again come forward and proposes to write £25,000,000 in the place of Sir S. Northcote's £28,000,000. The other day I had a letter from a very experienced financier, Sir Thomas Farrer, whose connection with Sir Stafford Northcote was well known, and he says:—

"I confess I do feel very bitterly that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer should have destroyed the two great works of Sir S. Northcote's financial life—first, his institution of cheap sugar; and, secondly, the Sinking Fund."

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): Not the cheap sugar.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman has not done it yet, and I hope he will not succeed, but he has done his best. The right hon. gentleman is an accomplice in the one case and a principal in the other. I will not, however, dispute that point with him; it is not now under consideration. He will not of course deny that he has cut down the 28 millions to 25 millions. I do not know whether he has in his pocket some of his favourite *tu quoque* arguments on this subject. I am not going to argue it on that basis. I am going to argue that the scheme propounded in 1875 was a scheme which was to be permanently applicable to the reduction of the National Debt, and that under it as the margin increased so the sum applicable to the reduction of the principal would increase. This great scheme which was so much extolled in the year 1875, has been pared down to the extent of three millions. But it is not only that; there is also a question of principle involved, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has established a principle that as you go on diminishing the National Debt, so you may diminish the Sinking Fund. If you are to do that, the whole value of the principle on which the scheme is founded is destroyed. I do not know whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer thinks that warnings of this kind are dictated merely by partisan hostility to his financial measures; but if he does so I would advise him to look at the *Economist*—a paper by no means hostile to the Government or its Members—and he will see there what is said of his finance and the principles on which it is founded. There was some justification for suspending the operation of the scheme when it was first propounded, but that is a totally different thing from permanently reducing it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer does not intend to meet an exceptional demand at a particular period by a temporary suspension of the Sinking Fund, but he proposes by this Bill and by his previous Bill of 1887 permanently to reduce the figure of the Sinking Fund, and consequently to deprive the financial system of this country of what was considered a great resource. After all, we are not doing so very much to reduce the National Debt as compared with the efforts of America in that direction. We think it a great thing if we set aside six or seven millions a year for the reduction of the Debt, but after all the amount now devoted to the service of the Debt is lower than it has ever stood for the last 20 years. I am not saying that the amount applicable for the reduction of the Debt is lower, but the sum devoted to the payment of principal is less, and the total amount set apart for National Debt purposes is to be 25 mil-

lions instead of 28. I look upon this as a retrograde financial operation, and I think we should not have been justified in allowing the Bill to pass its Third Reading without calling attention to the matter.

*Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I should like to say one word on this subject. I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman opposite that the principle of the reduction of the National Debt is a matter of enormous importance, and I must say that I regret that we have departed from the rule laid down by Sir S. Northcote that £28,000,000 should be the amount set apart annually for the interest on and the extinction of the Debt. Doubtless it is attractive to reduce the Sinking Fund because the rate of interest is reduced, and we all know that pressure was put on the Chancellor of the Exchequer to do this. In my opinion, however, the right hon. Gentleman would have acted more wisely if he had remained firm on that subject, and many on this side of the House would have supported him. I think it is not satisfactory that this country should allow the enormous incubus of the National Debt to remain. Looking to what is going on around us, and especially to the possibility of America becoming a Free Trade Nation, it is quite probable that future generations of our countrymen may find themselves, perhaps earlier than is imagined, severely handicapped in the competition of the world, and the fact of our not having paid off more rapidly this enormous Debt during periods of prosperity may very much retard our future progress. Under Sir S. Northcote's plan it was calculated that the Debt would be paid off in 60 or 70 years, and I much regret that that plan has been departed from. I hope it will be distinctly laid down, somehow or other, that the Sinking Fund shall not again be disturbed.

Sir G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I have been a good deal surprised that this Bill has gone through so many stages without more being said about it by the great financial authorities on the Front Opposition Bench. Now that the great authority on that Bench has spoken, I will say that I did view with great dislike and distrust the decrease of our efforts to diminish the National Debt. It is sometimes said that the National Debt has been very much decreased, but I may point out that there has been a great increase of local debt.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol): I should like to endorse the remarks of the hon. Member opposite. America will soon enter the field against us nearly free from debt, while we shall be handicapped in the commercial competition with a heavy debt and a heavy expenditure. So long as America retains her present Protective policy we are safe; but when she enters on a Free Trade policy then the danger to us will arise. It is not the Navies of the world we have to fear, but it is the competition of a Free Trade America.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member for North Islington says the House would have supported me if I had maintained the Sinking Fund at its original level. I think it is possible, provided this would not have invited raising money elsewhere, but I do not think I should have been supported if the maintenance of the Sinking Fund had involved, as it would have done, the imposition of additional taxation. My hon. Friend seems to suppose that under the present arrangement the Debt will not be paid off in 60 or 70 years as Sir S. Northcote calculated it would be by maintaining the Sinking Fund at the level of 25 millions, but in that the hon. Member is mistaken. At the reduced rate of interest the whole Debt will be paid off in less than 60 years, and, therefore, so far as the spirit of Sir S. Northcote's proposal is concerned, we stand very much where we were in 1875. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to draw a distinction between the several ways in which the burden of interest on the Debt may be reduced. The right hon. Gentleman has rather confused two different points. We may reduce interest by paying off Debt, or we may reduce interest by reducing the rate of interest. Now, Sir, S. Northcote's whole scheme is based on a reduction of the capital of the Debt, and thereby of the interest chargeable on that capital, but he did not contemplate, and no one contemplated at that time, that it would be possible to reduce the rate of interest, first, by one-twelfth, and then by one-sixth, and the reduction of the rate of interest to that extent

has practically put the country in this position, that a much smaller permanent payment will have the same effect as the large payment contemplated by Sir S. Northcote. The right hon. Gentleman said the Sinking Fund was a growing fund. So it will continue to be a growing fund, and let it be distinctly understood that, by the operation of this Bill, I do not retard by one single day the result which was in the view of Sir S. Northcote. Therefore, the charge of the right hon. Gentleman, or that of Sir T. Farrer in the same direction, I look upon as utterly unfounded. Perhaps Sir T. Farrer was thinking of the operation of two years ago, but if he meant to touch by his remarks the operation of this year, he was as much in error in saying that the Government are upsetting the scheme of Sir S. Northcote, as he would be in saying they propose to destroy the cheapness of sugar as secured by Sir S. Northcote. Generally, however, I consider the remarks made in the discussion as perfectly fair and legitimate criticism, and that it is right to call the attention of the country to the very important subject of the diminution of the Debt. I am glad to find the right hon. Gentleman so orthodox upon that subject, for I think I remember certain passages in his history when he declared that he considered it was not detrimental to the interests of the country to have a large National Debt, and that a great deal too much fuss was made with regard to the reduction of the Debt. I should be extremely sorry if I have in any way disparaged by what I have done the great merits of what Sir S. Northcote was able to accomplish in this direction. I may also point out that when Sir Stafford Northcote propounded his scheme for the payment of 28 millions annually, the income tax stood at 2d. in the £, whereas at present it is 6d. Sir Stafford Northcote himself said that if the income tax stood at a much higher level, the Chancellor of the Exchequer might possibly see fit to make some change in the Sinking Fund. Sir Stafford Northcote therefore did not intend that his system should be such a cast-iron system that it would be perfectly out of the question for any future Chancellor of the Exchequer to touch it. I believe myself that standing at £25,000,000 this fund is safer than when it stood at £28,000,000. When the Sinking Fund is so large it offers a peculiarly strong temptation in case of emergencies. As it stands at present, the arrangement provides for a certain payment of more than £5,000,000 a year, increased by nearly half a million next year, and subject to a further steady, though small, increase in each successive year, and I think it cannot be held that this is a niggardly arrangement for the repayment of the National Debt. During the last two years we have been able to pay off more Debt than has been paid off during any two previous years except on one occasion. The right hon. Gentleman argues that I am reducing the Sinking Fund. As a matter of fact I am merely reducing the charge by the reduction of the interest of the National Debt. The amount of capital annually paid off will not be reduced. Besides that you will have an additional £500,000 next year, and if you look at my present financial arrangements as a whole you will find that so far from diminishing the payment of capital I shall have added to the means of paying off the Debt.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I do not agree with the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman as to the action of Sir Stafford Northcote. The principle of Sir S. Northcote's scheme, was that this country in time of peace could afford an annual charge of £28,000,000 out of which to pay the interest of the Debt and the surplus to go to the reduction of the Debt itself. It is not a question between the Sinking Fund and interest, but whether in 1889 £25,000,000 is an adequate sum for this country to bear in respect of the National Debt, having regard to its amount, and with reference to what the country has hitherto borne. Sir S. Northcote, in a time differing from the present, thought that £28,000,000 was a moderate sum for this country to bear. But several years after this Sir S. Northcote came upon evil times. The Government was involved in several wars, a very considerable deficit had accumulated year after year, and Sir S. Northcote had just before him a General Election, and must, therefore, have been tempted to deal with the Sinking Fund in order to produce a popular Budget. No one can doubt that finance played a

very material part in the controvery of 1879. Sir S. Northcote, however, instead of reducing the charge, positively increased it to £28,800,000, the £800,000 being put on in order to pay off the deficit that had accumulated. I think Sir Thomas Farrer is a much more accurate exponent of Sir S. Northcote's intentions than the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I think that the House ought to ask whether, in a time of profound peace, of unparalleled prosperity, with national investments accumulating, this country ought not to bear an annual burden of £28,000,000. This is the lowest figure at which the National Debt charge has stood within the present century. When the Queen came to the throne in 1837, the annual charge for the National Debt was largely in excess of £28,000,000. To-day we are not prepared to pay £28,000,000, or even £26,000,000, but are asked to put our hands upon what the Chancellor of the Exchequer calls this unforeseen windfall. Our local debt is now increasing at very rapid strides. I am aware that a portion of that Debt represents a remunerative expenditure, but nevertheless, so far as the National Balance Sheet is concerned, we are increasing our National indebtedness year after year, if you put together the National Debt and the Local Debt. I think this was not a year to have selected for the reduction of the charge for the National Debt by another million. I quite admit that an exceptional period might arise, such as a war or an unusual depression of trade, when we should be justified in suspending payment of Debt for a year or two. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would have been supported on both sides of the House if he had firmly held to the principle of not tampering with the fund set apart for the liquidation of the National Debt.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): What I protest against is that a Government belonging to the same Party as Sir Stafford Northcote should, within less than 15 years, make two attacks upon the principle involved in the scheme he drew up. I do think that in a time of profound peace, progress, and prosperity, the Government, instead of making a further attack upon the payment off of the National Debt, should have, in accordance with Sir Stafford Northcote's scheme, tried to make a very large reduction in the Debt.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): This is a financial and not a political question, and I rather go beyond the notions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I never could understand why we should pay off one shilling of the National Debt. My own impression is that if we were to pay off the Debt we should at once say, "We can afford to go to war; we can afford to meddle with matters which do not concern us, and run up a fresh debt." The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has said the Debt is increasing because the Local Debt is increasing. But the Local Debt is represented in the main by property. The Debt is not increasing when you get remunerative property. We have to pay our way. Not only have we to pay interest on the debts incurred, but we have to pay them off. I shall support any Chancellor of the Exchequer who is prepared to take off a certain amount of the taxation that now presses on the community and reduce the amount that we annually pay off towards the National Debt. That I regard as sound finance. The real extent of debt is relative to the property that the person owing it has. Suppose that 50 years ago we had entered into these wild notions about paying off the National Debt. We should have paid really three times as much as now, because the income tax yields much more at present, and the burden of debt is not half as great as it was then. In 50 years' time, with the increase of wealth, the existing Debt will relatively be much less, and the burden of it will be much less than it is at present. My only regret is, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has laid hold of the windfall which came into his hands, owing to a reduction of the interest on the Debt, in order to expend it in warlike preparations. I should like to have seen him take off more of the tax, but, at any rate, I am thankful for a small mercy.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): My hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere) is no doubt sincere in his exposition of his views of sound finance, but I myself do not see the difference in this matter between the nation and individual. If a family find themselves heavily burdened, they feel it is

just and fair to themselves, and to their own home, and to the future interests of posterity, to do their share towards reducing the Debt. And so it is in my view with nations, even if there were no more serious reasons to be urged in favour of it. I therefore always felt grateful to the Conservative party, led by Sir Stafford Northcote, for its efforts towards the reduction of the National Debt. I do not think the precise procedure was a particularly wise one. Sinking Funds are very apt to be seized upon by some impecunious Minister, or some popularity hunting Minister. A sound method of reducing the Debt, which I hope both Parties in the House will be willing to adopt, is to keep the Estimates low, to exercise due economy, to be sufficiently liberal with the Estimates, to have surpluses, and then to let the surpluses go to the reduction of the Debt year by year. That seems to have been the old and wise Liberal policy, and I wish it were adopted by our Conservative friends. I must say I view with considerable surprise the proceedings of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has been recently introduced into the Conservative Party, and who seizes upon one of the wisest things that Party ever attempted to do to meet his financial exigencies. He has deliberately taken a considerable portion of the money set aside for the reduction of Debt by the Conservative Party, and insists all the time that he has done no such thing. I felt ashamed when I saw him do it two years ago. Instead of keeping the income tax at the figure it was and boldly sticking to the guns which had been left him to serve, he reduced the income tax by seizing upon £2,000,000 a year. And now, having a second opportunity of getting an annual sum towards reducing the Debt, he takes advantage of his position and secures another million sterling a year, so that we are in the position of applying only 25 millions instead of 28 millions sterling to the extinction of Debt. My hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) says we ought to be thankful for small mercies. I do not see what the special mercy he is referring to is, but the special mercy I should be thankful for would be that the Conservative Government who are now in power, and who, according to all appearances, are likely to be in power for some time to come, should, instead of increasing the charges of the country, exercise economy, and having obtained sums in that way should boldly apply the saving to the reduction of the Debt.

SIR J. MCKENNA (Monaghan, S.): My hon. Friend who has just spoken has pointed his argument by saying that the Government ought to act for the country as a private individual should act—that is, to pay off their debts as rapidly as possible, and that therefore we should not now reduce our annual payments of 28 millions to 26, but rather pay off the National Debt still more rapidly than we have been doing. I must point out the defect in this reasoning. The National Debt is a charge in the whole inheritance of the country, whilst the taxes to pay the interest, and to reduce the principal, as we have been and are doing, are levied on the life estate, and out of that still more precarious life estate, the earnings of the people, who have no other estate of any kind. The heavily taxed population of Great Britain, and the still more heavily taxed population of Ireland, are paying off the National Debt in a manner and at a rate most unjust to them. I feel bound to complain of the injustice involved in the fashion in which the Irish people are called upon to contribute to the payment of the National Debt. In 1853 there was a solemn engagement made to Ireland upon the question of the income tax. Ireland was to pay additional amounts in Customs and Excise Duties, and the income tax was not to be renewed, however, and in the first 25 years after the new taxation came into force between 70 and 80 millions of the National Debt were paid off, of which Ireland paid more than 60 millions by means of the additional exactions. My complaint is not that the Chancellor of the Exchequer provides too little for the reduction of the principal, but too much. I am only sorry that the right hon. Gentleman did not see his way to give more relief to the taxpayer. The debt took several hundred years to pile up, and at the present rate it would be paid off in 50 years, or say in the lifetime of a man of twenty.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham): I think the burden of the National Debt is a very light one in comparison with

the advantages which we have obtained through having the Debt. It is really the very best investment the country ever made. It represents the cost of a great war in which we engaged, but the result of that war was to give us our naval supremacy and that unparalleled extension of commerce from which we now derive such overflowing wealth. Ought not this generation, which has reaped the fruits of the exertions of former generations, do something out of its wealth to clear off the Debt? It is a bad sign that the principal supporter of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in reducing the amount available every year towards paying off Debt is the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who avows that his object is that if we should be engaged in any war hereafter we should not have the means of carrying on that war successfully.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I did not say that. What I said was that we should not be as anxious for war if we knew we had a considerable amount to pay for interest on the National Debt.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN: That is only another way of putting the same thing. The hon. Member is anxious we should have this burden of Debt so heavy upon us, that if it is incumbent on the nation to go to war for the protection of its honour or interest, we should have to think, not once, but twice, before we go to war. I certainly do not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his ingenious speech disposed of the point raised on the other side and enforced by the hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley). The right hon. Gentleman's argument rather surprised me. He said, that when Sir Stafford Northcote applied 28 millions sterling a year towards the reduction of the burden of the Debt, the income tax was only 2d. in the pound, and therefore the burden on the taxpayers was not so severe as now when the tax amounts to 6d. in the pound. Surely, that argument cuts the other way. If we could afford to give 28 millions sterling out of the annual revenue towards the reduction of Debt when the income tax was 2d. in the pound, we certainly ought to be able to devote that amount, or even more, when the income tax is 6d. in the pound. Then the Chancellor of the Exchequer contents himself by saying that although he is not putting so much aside towards the reduction of the principal of the Debt, he has done a great deal by reducing the rate of interest, and that practically we are now in the same position as we were in when Sir Stafford Northcote set aside 28 millions sterling, and that the 25 or 26 millions sterling will have the same effect. But I do not think that is a satisfactory state of things, for it appears that after all this reduction of the rate of interest on the Debt by one-twelfth, and afterwards by one-sixth, the country will only be in the very position in which it was placed by Sir Stafford Northcote, when he established this plan of the Sinking Fund, because, in proportion to the amount gained by the reduction of the annual interest, we have a diminution of the sum set apart for reducing the Debt. I certainly do not think it is very heroic finance if we, after all this great conversion of interest, are only to be placed in the same position as that in which Sir S. Northcote left us. Surely with all the advantages flowing into the country, with reviving trade, with wealth increasing in an unprecedented way, we ought to be able to do a great deal more than Sir Stafford Northcote did, and if the time should come, as we are told it is likely to come, when we may be engaged in a serious struggle, in which all the resources of the nation will be required to maintain our interests and the greatness of the Empire, now is the time to diminish the burdens upon our population, and to take care that we shall be prepared to meet any enemies hereafter with whom we may have to contend. If we do not do that, when the time of trouble comes we shall have serious cause to regret our neglect and want of thrift in more prosperous times.

Bill read a third time, and passed.

SUPPLY [20TH MAY].

Resolution reported.

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS II.

"That a sum, not exceeding £22,347, be granted to Her Majesty to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the office of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, and of the office of Land Revenue Records and Inrolments."

Resolution agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £67,163, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Expenses connected with the Acquisition of the Submarine Telegraph Company's Property required for the Post Office Telegraph Service."

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): As the subject matter of this Vote has provoked a certain amount of discussion out of doors, and of question in the House, perhaps the Committee will expect, or at any rate excuse, a few observations from me by way of introduction to this Vote which has been put from the Chair. The question was touched upon in March last, when a portion of the staff was taken into the public service in consequence of the abrogation of the concession formerly enjoyed by the Submarine Telegraph Company, but the Committee then very considerately agreed to postpone further inquiry until the Government were in a position to put before them the Estimate now in our hands. The Estimate does not require a very long explanation. The Committee will see there are five subheads which go to make up the total sum now asked for in connection with the acquisition of this undertaking, and a note at the bottom of the first page shows how the sum of £28,300 is made up. Two cables have been purchased between England and Belgium, at a cost of £9,900, and four cables between England and France, together with a short land connection, for £18,400. As these purchases have been made, as the Committee are aware, in conjunction with the Governments of Belgium and France respectively, who become partners with us in the new undertaking, half of the sum will be recovered by the appropriation of the amounts in aid shown at the end of the Estimates now before the Committee, that is to say, that, of the £28,300 for the purchase of the cables, £14,150 may be expected from the Governments of France and Belgium. I should, perhaps, point out that the price given for the cables was arrived at after long and very careful consideration. I take the Belgian cable first. The Belgian Government sent over here financial delegates, who in conjunction with experts from the Post Office, arrived at the conclusion that £9,900 was the fair value of the two cables as they stand. As there was no difficulty between the two Governments on the point, this matter may be dismissed from further consideration. Both Governments agreed that this sum fairly represented the value, and so there was an end of that part of the transaction. The cables of France led to a good deal more consideration, and a considerable divergence of view manifested itself between the French and the English calculation, the French calculation being at the utmost something in excess of £10,000, and the English calculation being something above £17,000. The natural outcome was, as might have been expected, that a sum representing a compromise between the two figures was adopted, a sum of something over £14,000, and to this was added 10 per cent. as representing the sum the Company might fairly expect from the termination of their business, and the compulsory expropriation of their property. But it appeared to the Government on the earnest representations of the Submarine Telegraph Company, that the estimate so arrived at really represented less than the material value of the cables, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer called in the services of an expert as a valuer to check the value arrived at previously by the two Governments and the experts of those Governments. The result of this further valuation by Mr. Latimer Clark was that the English calculation represented a just but a severe valuation of the cables, that is to say, that our Commissioners in fixing the selling price at something over £17,000 did not go beyond what the Company had a right to expect as the purchase price. This of course was a good deal more than in the first instance we had reason to believe the French Government would be willing to pay, and I have gone so far into details to bear tribute to the handsome, generous spirit manifested by the French Government in dealing with this part of the question; for no sooner was it communicated to them

that the Government here, though recognising their right to fix the price at the sum I have mentioned, £14,000 plus 10 per cent. for compulsory purchase, although the English Government recognised the right of the French Government to treat the matter from that point of view, we had satisfied ourselves that the cables were really worth £17,000 as they stand, and were agreed that that sum ought to be paid, and were prepared and come to Parliament to ask for an arrangement to be made to enable that price to be given, even though the French Government held to the bargain at the lower figure—no sooner was this communicated to the French Government, than they at once acceded to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's request, and expressed their willingness to accept the valuation at the higher figure, although it was £3,000 in excess of the amount arrived at in the communications between the two Departments. That being so, the result appears in the Estimate before the Committee £18,400, and of that sum we anticipate the receipt of one-half from the French Government. The next largest item in the Estimate is that relating to the acquisition of buildings, cable-ship, instruments, and stores, including fees to valuers, no less than £46,763, the sum being made up, as hon. Members will see by looking at the next page, of various sub-items, the most important of which is the purchase of the office in London, the stores, instruments, and furniture there amounting in all to £24,679. This may seem a large amount, but when it is remembered that it represents an enormous amount of very valuable telegraphic appointments, and also the lease of 80 years of the Company's premises in Throgmorton Avenue, capable of accommodating a staff of 300, I think it will be acknowledged we have made a good bargain. The premises are well adapted for the business, and in the very heart of the City; they were built nine years since, and they are in perfect repair. There are some small buildings at Dover and at St. Margaret's Bay that hardly require comment, but I may mention £9,542 as having been paid for the purchase of a gas engine, pneumatic tube, instruments and stores, and £9,570 for the cable-ship *Lady Carmichael*. This vessel has been for some ten or fifteen years employed as the cable-ship of the Submarine Telegraph Company, but she has been entirely re-fitted, provided with new boilers, and made as good as new, and is now, I understand, classed A 1 at Lloyd's. As an illustration of the large sum that has formerly been paid for a cable-ship, I may mention that at the present time the Post Office cable-ship, a larger ship, employed in the distant and stormy seas of Ireland, and laying cables to Orkney and Shetland—this vessel, three times as large as the *Lady Carmichael*, cost when purchased by the Government £40,000, so the price of £9,570 for the *Lady Carmichael* is not excessive. I may say that these matters were arrived at after careful valuation. The next item relates to the bonuses to be given to the officers of the Company who are not taken into the service of the State, £5,500. The Committee, of course, are familiar with the fact that when upon the termination of an undertaking by the action of the Government certain persons are not considered suitable for various reasons for the service of the Government, a claim for a certain amount is allowed as compensation for the summary dispensation with their services. The number of gentlemen in this position is not large, and the sum is not large, and I do not think anybody will be disposed to quarrel with this part of the Estimate. The interest on the purchase money I need only refer to as accruing through the delay in completing the transaction. So far in explanation of the Estimate itself. I do not wish to delay the Committee at length in dealing with the general question, but I think I may say a word or two with regard to the reasons that led the Government to acquire this property, and the result the Government believe they are justified in anticipating from the acquisition. There has been a steady pressure brought to bear during the last few years by the mercantile community in this country on the Government, urging that as soon as opportunity offered the Government should terminate the intermediary position occupied by the Submarine Telegraph Company. I do not think there have been any exceptions to that opinion. All the numerous bodies which represent commerce and the mer-

cantile community, have continually memorialized the Post Office and the Treasury with a view to the Telegraphs becoming the property of the State, in conjunction with the other States with whose territory the cables communicate, so that a more direct and efficient service might be established. I am happy to believe that this result has now been arrived at. Hon. Members who have seen the proceedings at the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, which has been foremost in pressing the question of acquisition on the Government, will see that immense satisfaction has already been expressed by the merchants of Liverpool at the result of the transfer. One of these in his speech in the Chamber of Commerce mentioned, that, whereas until a month or two ago, it took four hours to get a telegram transmitted to Hamburg, it is now received, allowing for the difference in time, a quarter of an hour before the date of despatch, that is to say, if you allow three quarters of an hour for the difference of time, the transmission of a telegram between London and Hamburg, is almost instantaneous. There have been earnestly pressed on the Government the advantages of a direct communication between Liverpool and Havre, and I hope this will be in operation within three months from the present time, and no doubt this will be a great advantage to both places, and especially to those engaged in commerce between the two ports. I dare say some Members of the Committee will be aware that the French Government at the time when the concession to the Submarine Telegraph Company was running out, in the latter part of last year, were not unfavourably disposed towards a renewal of that concession, and I believe, though I am not able to speak with certainty, that the Submarine Company were able to offer substantial inducements for a renewal of the concession. We, on this side of the water were anxious that the concession should terminate, and we had to bring to bear all the friendly pressure in our power to induce the French Government to adopt our views. I refer to this in order to show how in this instance also the French Government have shown themselves extremely willing and anxious to act in co-operation with Her Majesty's Government, and were prepared to make what to them appeared considerable sacrifices towards that end, and to put this business on a satisfactory basis for the future. So much for that part of the subject. But I am in a position to make a statement in reference to that part of the subject upon which I briefly touched some months ago. It was on the 4th of March this year that I announced to the House the main results of the arrangements at that time nearly completed with Germany, Holland, Belgium, and France, as to the rate at which words should be charged in each telegram for the future. On March 4th I made a statement as to the probable result in answer to the hon. Member for the City of London. No special discussion or comment in the House or in the Press appeared to follow that announcement, but still, I believe that at the time we were right in supposing there was something like a unanimous approbation of the main outlines of our plan. I believed, and I still believe, the public will be very glad to see the conclusion of an arrangement so long the object of desire by those principally concerned, and recommending itself on grounds of efficiency and economy. I do not think that any disposition is likely to be shown to cavil at the price paid for the objects I have enumerated. I confess myself that, if there is one part of the scheme that will be more attractive than another, I believe it will be the substantial reduction which the Government have been able to effect in the word rate for telegrams to foreign countries. So long as the Submarine Company had its intermediary rights, the price per word to Germany and Holland was threepence, to Belgium twopence, and to France twopence halfpenny. We have succeeded after a great deal of negotiation in bringing down the price per word in each case to twopence, that is to say, there is no reduction in the price to Belgium, in the cases of Germany and Holland there has been a reduction of 33 per cent, and to France of 20 per cent. I think, if the Committee will bear with me, I can show how very substantial that reduction is with regard to these particular services. Take the case of France, where hitherto the word rate between the two countries has been twopence halfpenny. I may take that as equivalent to 25 centimes. Of those 25 centimes the French Government were entitled to receive 11,

and 14 were divided between England and the Submarine Company, and the division was made upon a principle which practically amounted to something like an equal distribution, that is to say, the Submarine Company received about 7 centimes and the English Government about the same amount. The arrangements for the future, and fixed for five years, leave France 11 centimes, but France at the same time is called upon to undertake all the expenses on that side of the water, which hitherto have been borne by the Submarine Company, and I believe also France gives up a sum of something like 60,000 francs annually which the Company paid the Government for the use of offices. France then has accepted certainly a not inconsiderable addition to the working expenses, and may fairly claim the same amount of payment per word. Whereas England and the Submarine Company used to receive 14 centimes per word, England in future will receive 9 centimes, that is to say, the 7 centimes per word, which went to make up the large dividends of the Submarine Company, is transferred to the English Government, and there remain two centimes, with which the English Government carry on the work which hitherto has cost 7 centimes. So far as the position of the Submarine Company is concerned, and with this alone we have to do, the Government undertake to do for 2 centimes what the Company did for 7 centimes, and the public get the benefit of the bargain by the saving of 5 centimes on every word transmitted, and I venture to think the public could hardly expect a better bargain. But it has been made the subject of question and attack, because some very ignorant or very captious persons say, "Why do you charge twopence between England and France when you only charge a halfpenny a word from any part of England to the most distant parts of Scotland or Ireland or to the Channel Island?" Well, I should have thought the answer is sufficiently obvious. Messages are sent to Scotland, Ireland or Jersey, as part of the system that obtains for the whole of the country, and the cost of sending a message a long distance is balanced by the much less cost of short messages sent from one point to another in all our great towns, these last making up for the loss on the longer distances. But even so, it will be remembered that for years back the telegraphic business has been carried on at an annual loss. This year, for the first time for about ten years, the work of the telegraphic system of the British Isles will show a balance on the right side, and that presumably a very small one. I believe that the profits we may anticipate from the acquisition of the submarine telegraphs may be put down at between £15,000 and £20,000 a year. The *Times* about a month ago thought proper to make a violent attack on me with reference to this question. It wound up an article which, I am sorry to say, was very little more than a tissue of misrepresentations, by asking whether the Postmaster-General would justify the bargain which he had made on international, postal, or financial grounds. My answer is very plain. I justify it expressly on all three. I justify it on international grounds, because this arrangement will secure the greatest possible advantage for international communication. It is a great blessing, not only to our own mercantile community, but also to the mercantile communities abroad, and it is of enormous benefit generally, that an efficient service should be conducted. I justify it upon postal grounds, because I have already explained that the argument derived from the existing tariffs in the British Isles is really no argument at all. I justify it on financial grounds, because it is an arrangement which, while of enormous advantage to the public who send telegrams, by largely reducing the cost of telegraphic communication, it also shows a modest balance in favour of the British taxpayer. It is not an arrangement in which Her Majesty's Government have been absolutely able to fix their own terms. They have had to come to an understanding with foreign Powers, and I think as far as they have gone, foreign Powers have met the Government in a liberal and free spirit. It is said, however, that this arrangement has been made for ten years. But every arrangement made with a foreign Power has to be made for a certain term; and there is this advantage in this arrangement, that eventually England and France will become partners on fair and equal

terms. But it is always open to the Government to review their position, and if it should happen in the course of those ten years that the French Government should modify their view, it will be open to my successors to negotiate with France, and see whether this Convention can be amended in any way acceptable to both countries. The subject has created a good deal of interest, but I believe the Committee will approve of the arrangement generally, and that it will accept it even in detail. I am confident we have made an arrangement which is extremely beneficial to the country, from an international, a postal, and a financial point of view, that it will largely extend the present facilities of commerce, and will do so upon a basis which at all events should be the basis of all sound finance.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I think we shall all join in congratulating the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General on having made an arrangement which has put a stop to the monopoly that formerly existed, and has established a Government tariff for foreign telegrams. The question divides itself into two entirely separate branches, the first being the sum we have to pay for the acquisition of the rights of the Submarine Company, and the second the rate charged by the Government to the public for foreign telegrams. As regards the sum proposed to be paid, I admit that the Postmaster General seems to have made out a pretty good case. I cannot assent, however, to the doctrine of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with reference to compulsory expropriation of the company. There was no compulsory expropriation at all, because the monopoly came to an end by effluxion of time. The right hon. Gentleman has not told the Committee how the valuations were arrived at. We all know that in these valuations the Post Office is very apt to be "done," and the valuations are apt to be excessive.

MR. RAIKES: The valuations were by experienced and competent valuers.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Experienced and competent valuers, as we know too much to our cost in regard to the acquisition of the telegraphs in this country, are very apt to make Reports which are very unfavourable to the general public. I take it, however, on the authority of the Postmaster General, that he has gone thoroughly into the question. I do not see, however, why we should pay for the winding up of a company which came to an end by effluxion of time, which made an enormous profit, and which did not do its work as well as it is being done now. It was owing to the French concession that the company was able to make enormous profits, and one would have thought that it was the French Government, and not the British taxpayer, who should pay the compensation, if any was given at all. I was very glad, indeed, to hear the Postmaster General say that the French Government has dealt with the matter in such an excellent spirit, but I find that that Government has taken advantage of its position to get a very unreasonable share of the telegraph rates for the next five years to come. I do think that in this respect the French Government have driven a somewhat unreasonably hard bargain. That brings me to the question of the rates charged to the public. I believe that the rates are based upon the statement that the cost of telegraphing does not exceed ½d. a word. If so, why do you charge 2d. in regard to telegrams to Belgium? It may not be so important to Belgium, which is a small country, but what is the case as regards countries beyond? What is the arrangement as to Italy and Germany, and Switzerland, and further off countries? The Postmaster General has made out a case only with regard to France, and has not explained why there is to be so heavy a charge in regard to other countries immediately adjoining or those of the third degree.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I have to join in the complaint that this Vote has been sprung upon the Committee, and that the first intimation of its coming on was given by the Votes distributed this morning. Inquiries have been repeatedly made during the past four years whether the Government have entered into arrangements to complete the purchase of these cables so as to give us direct communication with France independently of the Submarine Company, and the House has been repeatedly told that the matter was in progress. Now, it is known that the bargain which has been made with the French Government is not of a

character to commend it to the people of this country. In the first place, we say that the amount to be paid to the Submarine Company is altogether too high. Then we say there is no reason why we should give bonuses to the servants of that company; and we say that the Government are going to pay far too much for old buildings which need not necessarily be included in the purchase. First, as to the rates between the two countries, I may point out in a few simple words the nature of the transaction. Hitherto, throughout France the telegraphic charge has been at the rate of ½d. a word, and that has also been the charge throughout England and across the Irish Channel to the extreme part of Ireland. It would, therefore, be natural to suppose that in any arrangement between France and England the charge for the transmission of messages would be 1d. a word—that is adding the ½d. charged in England to the ½d. charged in France—and I may add that the maintenance cost of the cable between Dover and Calais is infinitesimal—little more than that of a land line. The Postmaster General endeavoured to raise a false issue by saying it was ridiculous to contend that it should be a ½d. word rate, as we were losing on that rate in England; but in the next breath he said that this year he would be able to announce that the ½d. rate was paying throughout the country.

MR. RAIKES: I said I anticipated that we should be on the right side in the working of the telegraphs, but that there would still be a deficit on the capital originally invested.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I listened to what the right hon. Gentleman said, and gathered from him that this year there will be a profit on the ½d. telegrams. He now refers to the bad bargain we made years ago by paying more than we ought to have done for the telegraphs. But that, I say, has no more right than the Crimean War Fund to be charged to the general expenses of the country. At the rate between England and France that is proposed, the Government will be enabled to provide profits double those which have enabled the company to declare dividends of from 12 to 19 per cent. The Postmaster General is jubilant because the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce has endorsed his action; but it has been condemned by the more directly interested Paris Chamber of Commerce; and, as to the constitution of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, a leading Liverpool merchant, who has been for nearly 20 years a member of the Liverpool Exchange, has written me a letter questioning the competence of the Liverpool Chamber to speak with authority on the question. In 1862 the charge for telegraphic messages between England and France was 1½d. a word, and now there is to be a reduction of only ½d. a word on 2½d. Then, investigation proves that the bargain is a bad one for this country, because France is to get 11c., while this country gets only 9c. The only explanation the Postmaster General can give of this is that France has taken over some of the old offices of the Submarine Telegraph Company. But when the history of this company comes to be written it will be seen that a more glorious monopoly has never been heard of. This monopoly, which for 30 years has been dividing between 12 and 22 per cent, having sold old ships and stores at a good price, and obtained 10 per cent over the value, has the consummate impudence to ask for £5,500 as a bonus for those servants who are not taken over by the State. I trust the Committee will not tolerate for an instant the bad bargain that has been made for it, and to enable it to express its opinion I move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £28,300, the amount of the two items for the cables.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £38,863 be granted for the said Service:"—(*Mr. Henniker Heaton.*)

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I join with the hon. Gentleman behind me in congratulating the Postmaster General on the conclusion of the negotiations with the company and the termination of its monopoly, but I am bound to say there are some points of detail which are not satisfactory. I agree with the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken and cannot understand why 10 per cent should be given to the company over and above the value of its cables. The Postmaster General spoke of this as compensation given for compulsory pur-

chase, but I do not understand that there has been anything in the nature of compulsion in the arrangement between the Government and the Company. The Government was under no specific or actual obligation to take over the cables at all, but might have allowed them to remain where they were. There was no Act of Parliament which gave the Company a vested right, or which gave Parliament power to take over the property by compulsion. As to the compensation to be given to the officers in the service of the Company, I cannot understand why, if this compensation is to be given, it should not be given by the Company which has had the benefit of their services. I am glad to hear that, on the whole, the French Government have entered into the negotiations in a good spirit. We all know that they were not anxious to bring about the new arrangement, and could have obtained a considerable sum for the continuance of the concession. I can, therefore, well understand the great difficulty the right hon. Gentleman has had in the negotiation. I can only express the hope that, now the concession has come to an end, and it is a matter of arrangement between the two countries in the future, it will not be impossible, at some distant day, to effect a further reduction of the charge for messages between the two countries. Considering that ½d. per word is the charge in this country, and something less than ½d. in France, 2d., as between the two countries, does seem to me to be a very heavy charge. I am glad to hear, at all events, that at the end of five years the rate will be divided between the two Governments. That appears to me to be a very wise arrangement, and I cannot but hope that it will facilitate ultimately a further reduction. I should like to ask the Postmaster General when he spoke of a profit of £15,000 a year, he meant only in respect of the two centimes, which I understand will be the difference to this Government between the present and future charge. I understood him to say that the proportion paid to the English Government was seven centimes, whereas in the future it will be nine; and I wish to know whether he is taking that difference of two centimes, or he is considering the whole payment of the English Government? At any rate, I hope the time will not be far distant when negotiations may be opened with the French Government for a further reduction; I think this service should be kept separate, and not mixed up with the whole of our telegraph services, so that we may know the whole of the circumstances and learn when it has turned the corner and is likely to make a profit. I think that the prospects of the coming year are, on the whole, extremely satisfactory. They are very much more satisfactory than I anticipated four or five years ago, when the reduction was made, and I think a very considerable profit will be derived from the telegraph services at no distant date. But looking at the present service between England and France alone, I cannot but regard the present charge as high. The discussion of this Vote, I may add, has come upon us as a surprise. It was only this morning I saw the announcement of it in the Papers, and we have heard for the first time a full explanation of it, and I do not think I should be quite prepared to enter so fully into the matter as I might have otherwise done. The right hon. Gentleman must not be surprised if there is some renewed discussion on this most important matter.

*SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras): I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman has thought it right to refer to the former proprietors of the Submarine Telegraph Company and that he considers they have received too favourable terms in the six months' purchase of the cables. The proprietors hold that they are paid too little, and as far as concerns the rest of the property the Government are buying value. They are buying a valuable house and a steamer and other property, and altogether I think the shareholders in the Submarine Telegraph Company have some reason for saying that they have not been very handsomely treated, and the right hon. Gentleman was not justified in the observations he made.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I do think we ought to have a little further notice, and that these Votes should not be sprung upon us. I was not aware until this morning that this Vote was going to be taken. Now, I certainly do think that the hon. Gentleman opposite has moved too

large a reduction, though I think there are one or two items in this Return which we ought to look upon with suspicion. One is the 10 per cent upon the value of the cables, and I gather from the Postmaster General that it is in excess of the price that has been paid. Am I to understand that the cables are worthless at the present time, and that new cables could not be laid for a less amount than this 10 per cent? I should have thought they could be laid for considerably less. The cables are very thin; they are not like the Atlantic cables. Then, as regards compensation. Is this £5,000 to be given to the officials of the company? This was an exceedingly wealthy company; it has paid enormous dividends upon its capital. It has had the concession for 30 years, and it must have known that at the end of that period it would come to an end. I suppose they have put by a reserve fund; I should like to know the amount of it. And out of that reserve fund they could certainly give a bonus to their servants. I cannot understand for a moment why we are called upon to pay it. I should like to ask my hon. Friend the Chairman of the Company whether it will be divided among the Directors? [SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID: "No."] Is it to be entirely given to the officers, or to aged officers, or to any officers, or what? We are giving them this £5,000, and we are also giving them what I imagine is a very large and full sum for these buildings in the City. I should think if the hon. Gentleman opposite moved a reduction of, say this £10 per cent and the £5,000, he would get a Vote.

*SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID: Perhaps, Sir, you will allow me to answer the very interesting question of the hon. Gentleman on the subject of the cables. The cables, as you are aware, are laid in the Channel. They have constantly been broken by the fishing boats, and they have to be re-spliced, and new portions have sometimes to be substituted for that which was damaged. In any case, I can tell him the valuation of the company was made by the most competent authorities, and their valuation was far above what the Government have paid us, even with the 10 per cent in addition. Under the circumstances, we had to accept the Government proposal, but I repeat the observation I have made that it is not more than about six months' purchase of the net income of the cables. The hon. Gentleman has been good enough to say that he could put down new cables for the money. If that is so, the Government should be in a hurry to contract with him; but under ordinary circumstances, I know that new cables could not be put down for four times the amount. With regard to the payment of officers, perhaps the hon. Member may not be aware that Lord John Manners made an agreement with the Submarine Telegraph Company to extend their contract with the Post Office for ten years longer, and in consequence of that we applied to the French for a renewal of the concession, and at that time the French Government declined to give it; but since then they offered to renew it for 15 years. Then the English Government intervened and prevented the concession being signed. Under the circumstances, I do not think six months' purchase of the net income of the cables is an excessive price. As I have stated the Government have bought a house and a steamer, and they have paid their value. All I can say is that the Government have looked to the interests of the taxpayers, and they will obtain an ample return, notwithstanding the reduction in the charge for messages, and a very considerable profit, in fact—something like 20 per cent, or perhaps 30 per cent. Consequently, I think the hon. Member opposite need not complain of this small payment.

MR. RAIKES: I gratefully recognize the general feeling of the Committee as to the desirability of the arrangement which has been arrived at by the Government. But there are one or two points which I ought to notice. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy and other speakers have alluded to the 10 per cent, and the term "compulsory expropriation" has been commented upon. That is not an exact term, but it appeared to me that it was the best I could use to represent the argument I wished to impress upon the House. It is quite true that the company were not obliged to sell their cables and establishments to the Government. They were, however, practically obliged to sell them to the Government because they would

have got nothing for them if they had sold them to anyone else, as the Government could, by using its influence with the French Government, prevent the company or anyone else from carrying on the business. Although the company could not be said to have a legal claim upon the Government similar to a claim which a person would have whose business was compulsorily taken under the Lands Clauses Act, or any Act of that description, yet the Government, having by its own action terminated their business and made their property absolutely valueless unless they took it over, the company had a right, morally, to a fair and equitable consideration. The hon. Baronet the chairman of the company (Sir J. Goldsmid) has stated that the price given only represents six months' earnings, therefore I do not think it can be said that the Government have erred too much on the side of generosity. The 10 per cent was given in consequence of the compulsory expropriation. As to the bonus, to which objection has been taken, that bonus was given to the English *employés* of the company. We pay nothing to the French *employés*, and I ask would it have been creditable to the Government of this country if, after taking possession of the business of the company and having made a selection from among the *employés*, those whose services were not required were turned out into the world without any consideration? We might, of course, have declined to accept any of the *employés* of the company, and if we had done so I think the case for compensation would have been weaker than it now is. We deprived the servants of the company of their livelihood by terminating the business of the company, and then by discarding their personal services; and I think that a great country like this would have been inclined to find fault with the Government if they had not made the moderate provision they have with regard to the *employés*. The Government had to make the best terms they could with France, and the French Government has met them on several points in a liberal and handsome manner. Having arrived at an arrangement, which we believe is a good one for the country and a satisfactory arrangement for all parties concerned, no doubt Her Majesty's Government have been obliged in their turn to make some concessions to France. I am glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman opposite took notice of the provision that after a period of five years the rates are to be equal. In this matter we have, I think, established a principle which may be capable of considerable development. I do not say that it may not bear fruit even before the period of five years is reached. With regard to the Belgian rate of 2d. a word, Belgium would take no less. That country will get half the rate. We have succeeded in getting a penny off the rate hitherto payable for Germany and Holland; and substantial as I believe the reduction in the case of France to be, the reduction in the case of Germany and Holland is even more. The Government will of course be glad if France can at any time be persuaded to reduce her rates; but that is a matter within the competence of France and not of this country. The proposition of the hon. Member for Canterbury that we should leave out of consideration the interest on the purchase money for the telegraphs when dealing with telegraph revenue is an extraordinary one. The hon. Gentleman says the interest of £325,000 a year, which is interest on capital, has no more to do with the question of telegraph revenue than all sorts of things which he mentioned.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I said we paid an exorbitant rate for the property 19 years ago, and spent five millions more than we ought to have expended, and that in consequence we have to pay this large interest of over £300,000 per annum which we have no right to be called upon to pay.

MR. RAIKES: That is exactly what I wished to convey to the Committee—namely, that the hon. Gentleman is of opinion that we have no right to take into consideration one of the most expensive items in the whole telegraph system. As I have before said there is so much improvement in the working of the telegraphs that there is, I trust, a prospect of a fair excess of revenue over expenditure during the year. But in spite of that, the whole position of the telegraph revenue is one of a very large loss, representing nearly the whole of the interest on the original purchase. The hon. Member for Canterbury has

referred to a statement made by the *Times* on the subject of the Submarine Telegraph arrangement. The *Times* went out of its way to state that the profits which the Government were going to make out of the new arrangement would be twice the amount made by the Submarine Company. But the *Times* omitted to point out that one country received 11 centimes and the other 7 centimes.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: The right hon. Gentleman says the *Times* omitted to state that one country received 11 centimes and the other 7 centimes. I say that that statement is distinctly made in the *Times*.

MR. RAIKES: I do not know how far the hon. Gentleman is responsible for what has appeared in the *Times*, but I am alluding to a point in his statement in which he referred to this matter. The fact is that the service hitherto paid for at the rate of 7 centimes for England will hereafter be conducted for 9 centimes, and I am at a loss to see how, at that rate, the Government is going to make double the profit which has been made by the company. With regard to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), I do not understand that the right hon. Gentleman has seriously impugned any part of the arrangement, but he asks a question which certainly deserves an answer as to whether the profit which I have ventured to show is the result of the 7c. or the outcome of the 9c. My answer is that it is the outcome of the 9c. On that point I may refer to some figures which will be interesting to the Committee. The annual earnings of the Post Office during the tenure of the Submarine Company out of the 7c. were during the last year £154,800.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: For one year?

MR. RAIKES: Yes, for one year. The receipts from out of the new arrangement, assuming that the increase of service recoups the Department for the loss we are making by the reduction of the charge—that is to say, if the income is the same although the rate is diminished—will be £222,100; and the difference between those two figures—namely, £67,300—represents the increase of profit minus the working expenses entailed upon the Department by the new arrangement. The working expenses may be put at something exceeding £50,000, and from that I arrived at the figure of £15,000 profit which I have given. The hon. Member for Northampton thinks the Government could have got new cables cheaper. I wish we could do so; but I am assured by those most competent to deal with the matter that new cables could not be got for less than £115,000 to £120,000. I thank the Committee for the way in which the proposals of the Government have been received. I hope hon. Members will believe that the Department will not lose sight of the points raised in the discussion, and that as regards the future we shall be very glad to make a still further reduction in the rates which we now feel it our duty to exact.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: The hon. Baronet the Member for St. Pancras (Sir J. Goldsmid) has taken up a somewhat peculiar position. He argues that, as the Government are taking over cables which will require a good deal of patching up, therefore it is necessary to pay a high price for them. I should have thought that it ought to have been the other way. I entirely deny that that company, which has for so long enjoyed a monopoly, has any moral right to anything more than the actual value of the business. As regards the servants of the company, I wish my hon. Friend had told the Committee where the large sum for compensation is to go to, because I remember a case in which the Government of India were induced to buy up a very unpaying concern, and to give £50,000 as compensation to its servants, and it was afterwards discovered that of that sum £40,000 had been appropriated by the secretary of the company, the gentleman who had written the polemical letters which induced the Indian Government to buy out the company. While the Submarine Company had a monopoly, the rates were very high to some countries, and I hope there will be a general reduction. I had occasion some years ago to send a telegram to Switzerland, and I was certainly startled at the large amount of the charge. Have we any reason to expect a difference between

the charge of the monopolist company and the new charge?

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I do not quite understand the proposal of the Postmaster General. As I understand, the receipts of last year amounted to £154,800, and the right hon. Gentleman estimates that the receipts next year will amount to £222,100. Then he says that the Government are also taking over an expenditure of £67,000 a year.

MR. RAIKES: No; £67,000 is the difference between £154,800 and £222,100.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Then what is the profit that is now made? I take it to be rather more than £16,000. Does the hon. Gentleman expect to make that amount of profit in future? If there are larger receipts, I presume there will also be a larger expenditure, and the question is not altogether an unimportant one.

MR. RAIKES: I am not in a position to answer that question. What I want to point out is, that the acquisition of the property will put us in a position to make a profit of about £15,000. That is the amount of the difference between the Revenue under the old system and under the new, after deducting the working expenses. In reply to the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy, I may point out that the International Convention allows neighbouring countries, such as France and England, to make special arrangements between the time of one Convention and the meeting of the next, but that other countries are bound by the regulations made at the last International Convention until they next meet.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I quite understand that there will be a profit of £16,000 or £17,000 a year, but it appears to me that there must be a much larger profit at present.

MR. RAIKES: I quite understand what the right hon. Gentleman means, but I should not like to commit myself as to what amount of profit, if any, there may be more than at present.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Are we to have the whole of the enormous profit which my hon. Friend the Member for St. Pancras has told us is reaped by the Submarine Company?

MR. RAIKES: The whole profit that will be made out of the transaction is included in the figures I have given. The reduction in the rate will, of course, very largely reduce the profit.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I do not think that a sufficiently satisfactory explanation has been given as to the amount of the bonus—£5,500—given to the Submarine Company. The monopoly has lasted for 30 years, and there is a reserve fund of £20,000. I, therefore, think the company should provide for the pensioning of their servants out of the high dividends they have for many years been receiving. In reply to the observations of the Postmaster General upon the article in the *Times* newspaper, I wish to point out that in that article it is distinctly stated that though the charge for a telegram was at that time 25c, the company only received 7c, the remainder going to the Post Offices of both countries. How then could the Postmaster General make the statement with regard to the *Times* which we just heard? I still think the right hon. Gentleman has not given any explanation why, in the division of profits, France should have 11c and England only 9c.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON moved to reduce the Vote by £5,500, being the amount of the bonus to be paid for those officers of the Company who have not been taken into the service of the State.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £61,663, be granted for the said Service"—(*Mr. Henniker Heaton.*)

*SIR J. GOLDSMID: I would appeal to the hon. Member not to press this Amendment. As far as I am aware, we had a staff as capable of doing its work as any that could be found; but the Post Office, having regard to their own staff and for various other reasons, have decided not to employ a certain number. These have a right to compensation for loss of office. A renewal of the concession for 15 years had been obtained from the French Government, but the English Government stopped all arrangements. I hope the hon. Member

for Canterbury, who is usually of a generous turn of mind, will not be so mean as to deny to the men the compensation to which they are justly entitled.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I am sure that my hon. Friend himself would not be so mean as to deprive these men of their bonus. The question, however, is not whether the officials should be deprived of compensation, but whether the shareholders of the company or the Government shall pay it. My hon. Friend the Chairman of the company says that the French Government would have renewed the concession for a further term of years.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID: There was a promise to that effect.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Whether the French Government agreed to make a further concession or not, what has that to do with the bonus? The company has assets worth £66,000; they have enjoyed a monopoly for 30 years. During the whole of that period they have paid a dividend of 9 per cent.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID: No, it has averaged 6 per cent.

MR. LABOUCHERE: My hon. Friend says their dividend has averaged 6 per cent, an uncommonly good thing. They have further put by a sum of £120,000 as a reserve fund, which, with their assets, makes a total of £186,000. I cannot believe that a company, of which my hon. Friend is Chairman, would be so mean while they are so rich as not to indemnify the officials, who are represented as being the best and noblest of mankind. It appears that the officials of the company are both French and English, and the Postmaster General has declared in a "Rule Britannia" sort of spirit, that the French officials would receive no compensation from the English Government. "We do not give to Frenchmen, but to Englishmen." Why make such a distinction? If justice entitles the English officials to compensation, their French colleagues have an equally just claim. Justice is justice. It is not a question of particular men, but whether a present is to be made to the fortunate shareholders of the company of £5,500. A short time ago I had a dispute with my water company. I generally have one of the company's servants to wait on me, and he said that he would have to pay the money if I did not. I told him that I believed he was specially kept by the company for an emergency of that kind, and that I did not believe a word he said. In point of fact he was kept on by the company merely to go round and endeavour to get money illegally out of their customers. In the same way my hon. Friend is pleading the cause of his company. The fact is that the hon. Baronet is not pleading for the unfortunate officials, but for himself as a shareholder. I certainly think that we ought to vote against this £5,500, because I look upon the principle as utterly unsound, and believe that we are simply making a present of the money to the shareholders.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 128; Noes, 221.—(Div. List No. 122.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Class II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £42,250, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Commissioner of Her Majesty's Works and Public Buildings."

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College Div.): As a matter of form, Sir, I have to renew the Motion for a reduction which I made last night. I propose that this Vote be reduced by £100, and I intend briefly to recapitulate the reasons which lead me to do this. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Commissioner of Works, for whom I have the highest personal respect, has handed over the charge of Dunblane Cathedral to the Board of Manufactures. Now, this ruin is one of great historical interest and antiquity, and I contend the right hon. Gentleman in handing it over to that Board has acted without the smallest constitutional right, and, further than that, the Board is utterly

unfitted to be custodians of national property like this. I intend mainly to base my case upon the impropriety of this alienation of national property, and I therefore invite the House to reduce the Vote. The right hon. Gentleman stated that when he wished to hand over Dunblane Cathedral to a public body he cast his eyes upon the Board of Manufactures, and it was recommended to him by a deputation which included the hon. Member for Dumbartonshire and the hon. Member for Haddingtonshire, and as those hon. Gentlemen concurred in the choice of this body, he thought he could not be far wrong in following their advice. But I venture to say that neither of these hon. Gentlemen can be taken by the widest stretch of imagination to represent the concensus of Scotch opinion. The right hon. Gentleman said he had been in consultation with the Secretary for Scotland, who agreed in the selection of the Board of Manufactures. Now I have always contended that if the right hon. Gentleman wished to transfer this national property in Scotland, he should have handed it over to the Secretary for Scotland, not because I have any particular confidence in the present holder of that office, but because the office is always held by a Minister who is at all events theoretically responsible to this House. The right hon. Gentleman said he chose the Board of Manufactures because it was a non-political body, and such property, in his opinion, should be vested in non-political bodies. But the right hon. Gentleman himself is a Minister holding office, and he is a member of a political body, as also will be his successors, and yet there has never been the smallest objection to vesting national property in Ministers who are political personages. The right hon. Gentleman says that the Board of Manufactures is a well-known body which has a very ancient charter, and that formerly it was known as the Board of Manufactures and Fisheries, and he said this as if Fisheries made it a more proper body for taking charge of the ruins of Dunblane Cathedral. As a matter of fact, when the question of fisheries came to be discussed, this Board was considered to be so incompetent that it was taken out of their hands and intrusted to a Board of less aristocratic pretensions, and probably not possessing in an extraordinary degree the confidence of the Scotch people, yet it was still a great improvement on the Board of Manufactures and Fisheries. Sir, in order to bring home to the House what the right hon. Gentleman has done, I may say that it is precisely as if he had taken Furness Abbey and handed it over to the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers, which is certainly a more ancient body than the Board of Manufactures, and which numbers among its members names even more illustrious than those on the other Board. But I doubt if any Member would make such an absurd proposition, and if he did certainly the House would meet it with reprobation. I may take another illustration. It is as if the right hon. Gentleman were to take that sacred ground of Rotten Row, which is one of the most precious charges of the right hon. Gentleman, and handed it over to the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers for the purpose of making a high road of it. Yet what he has done with regard to Dunblane Cathedral is not less defensible than if he had pursued either of the courses which I have suggested. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has always shown himself to be a reasonable man, and I ask him to see how the Scotch Members vote on this subject, and to be guided by their opinion to alter the course he intends to take, and to withdraw from the proposed act of vandalism.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Salaries, &c., be reduced by £100, part of the Salary of the First Commissioner."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

MR. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): I wish in a very few words to give the reasons why I think it is my duty to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Glasgow. Sir, I had the pleasure of hearing a portion of the speech made by my right hon. Friend last night in defence of his policy. The right hon. Gentleman cited facts to show that the restoration is being carried on in a proper way. I do not intend

to deal with that branch of the subject at all. I have never had the pleasure of seeing Dunblane Cathedral, and am therefore not competent to give an opinion on the point. The restoration project may be good and it may be bad; in my view in all probability it will be bad. But the point I wish to bring before the House is this—In my opinion the Government ought not to part with their control over a public monument. We know the inconvenience that results from St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey not being under the control of Parliament. It has been suggested more than once that the control of national monuments should be handed over to a public body like the trustees of the British Museum, but although I am a trustee of the British Museum, I do not think that is a body what ought to be intrusted with the care of public monuments. Nor do I recognize the special fitness of the lawyers and men of science who form the so-called Board of Manufactures. I do not know whether they are specially fitted to manufacture cathedrals; probably they think they are. I wish particularly to ask the Chief Commissioner of Works if he has parted with all control over this building, or whether he has reserved to himself any power to retrace the steps taken and once more place the cathedral under the control of the Government.

*Mr. R. B. HALDANE (Haddington): As my name has been introduced into this discussion, I wish to say a word or two upon the subject. I think the question is one of considerably greater difficulty than is supposed by the hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow, because if the walls of this cathedral are not attended to by some authority which will preserve them more effectually than is likely under the present system they will fall. But, speaking from local knowledge, and as the result of recent inquiries, I must say I do not think it is desirable in the public interest, that these walls should be used as the walls of what is practically a new church. I have no special objection to the Board of Manufactures; it may be it is a very good body for the purpose of preserving cathedrals, but the question is, what is going to be done with this ruin? Now, having formed one of a deputation to the First Commissioner in support of something very like what is proposed to be done, it may be necessary that I should do penance in a white sheet, seeing that I find it incumbent on me now to object to the scheme. While approving of steps being taken to preserve the cathedral and maintain its walls intact, I do not think that restoration should be carried to the extent of constructing what is practically a new church. It is proposed, I understand, to frame and glaze, and otherwise change the character of an oriel window, which is a special object of interest, and has been written about by Ruskin. It is also proposed to bore holes in the west wall for the purpose of inserting new windows. The effect of these changes would be to completely alter the structure of the building. In the absence of any assurance that such things will not be done, I cannot oppose the reduction of the Vote.

Sir JOHN KINLOCH (Perth, E.): I wish to protest against any interference whatever with Dunblane Cathedral. I object, in the first place, to its being handed over to a particular church. In the second place, I wish to say that restoration is all very well in its place, but what would be said if it were proposed to restore Melrose Abbey or Fountains Abbey? You are proposing to restore one of our most magnificent ruins, and I say the projected restoration of Dunblane Cathedral would be a work of vandalism.

*Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Invernessshire): I shall—support the Amendment because I think it was not right to transfer Dunblane Cathedral to the Board of Manufactures; but at the same time I must say it is not a ruin in the sense that the abbeys just named are ruins. It would be very wrong to interfere with the character and main features of a building which is undoubtedly of great historical interest, though I do not gather that the proposed repairs will in any way interfere with its characteristics.

*The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket): The objec-

tion raised by hon. Members this evening seems to be solely confined to the transfer of this ancient ruin to the Board of Manufactures. I referred last night to the fact that although the Board was originally called a Board of Trustees for the Manufactures of Scotland, it really is now more an artistic body than anything else, and I assert again it would be impossible to find in Scotland or anywhere else a Board better suited for the purpose for which it is now being taken advantage of. The Board consists of the leading men of both political parties who have been asked to join it as I understand not only as useful members of the Board, but also to some extent as an honour to themselves. But my right hon. Friend the Member for Whitehaven objects to the transfer of any ruins or architectural objects of interest that are under the control of the Government to any other body whatever. There is, no doubt, a great deal to be said for that as a general principle. Though I do not go so far as my right hon. Friend in that direction, and I certainly do not agree with him in one part of his argument. I understand him to say that if you transfer an architectural structure of this kind to a body like the Board of Manufactures or even, as he said, to the British Museum you will have differences of opinion, and then those persons who are really authorities on the subject of art will very likely be outvoted, and he thinks, therefore, that the custodians should be responsible to Parliament and that the vote should be taken in the House of Commons. My right hon. Friend considers himself, and no doubt he is, a very excellent authority on questions of art, but I should like to ask him to search his memory and to tell me how many times he has been outvoted in this House on artistic questions. He never fails to express his views fully and positively, and no doubt they are very sound, but so far as I know they have never on any one occasion been very successfully put forward by him—never! What has happened in the present case is this:—There came to me an influential deputation representing the heritors of the district and other persons interested in the locality, and they urged very strongly upon me that this beautiful old ruin was going to decay, and that the best way to restore and maintain it for all time and to preserve its beauty would be to roof in the nave and otherwise render it fit to be used as a parish church. I must say the action of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Haddingtonshire (Mr. Haldane) to-day was the most melancholy exhibition of the backing of a friend that I have ever listened to in the House of Commons. My hon. Friend made to me a very eloquent speech as a member of that deputation, in which he urged the general propriety of the scheme, and the particular advantage of putting a roof on the walls of the cathedral with a view of preserving the ruin. I have in my hand a memorial which was presented by the hon. and learned Gentleman. It is as follows:—

"Your memorialists consider the fittest and wisest means of providing the extra accommodation required—"

that is to say, for the congregation—

"Is to utilize the ancient and beautiful nave of the cathedral. To do so involves the entire restoration of that part of the building, including the re-roofing of the nave. This cannot be accomplished without the consent of the Crown."

And then the memorialists go on to refer to the report of a very eminent Scotch architect whose Report was annexed to the memorial. In that report the architect said

"I am of opinion that the walls are strong enough to carry a new roof and that the decay, although considerable, is only superficial."

My hon. and learned Friend presented the memorial to me, supported as it was by the architect's view I have read. I can only say of the hon. and learned Gentleman

"Never more be officer of mine."

*MR. HALDANE: I am sure my right hon. Friend will remember that there were modest members of the deputation who remained perfectly silent. I was one of them. What we waited upon him for was to get something done to put Dunblane Cathe-

dral in a condition which would maintain its walls, and not to carry out any particular plan. I admit the force of the charge so far as possibly criminal negligence on my part is concerned, and I certainly shall not vote against the right hon. Gentleman's salary, for I do not intend to vote at all.

*Mr. PLUNKET: The accents of the hon. and learned Gentleman when he supported the memorial are still lingering in my ear. But I will pass that by. There was then a seeming unanimity in favour of the prayer of the memorialists, and there is still, as I showed last night, when we debated this question, an overwhelming preponderance of architectural authority in favour of what I have done. No opposition whatever was raised to the course which is now being taken until at the beginning of this year the hon. Member for the College Division asked me a question on the subject.

Sir G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): We are certainly in an unfortunate position in being obliged to raise this question in the odious form of reducing the salary of a Minister, and of such a Minister as the right hon. Gentleman. The good faith and good feeling of the right hon. Gentleman are conspicuous in every word he speaks, but we are face to face with a very serious principle indeed, which was raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), that is to say, whether an ancient and beautiful ruin ought to be left as an ancient and beautiful ruin, or converted into a modern church. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) truly says, he has very large architectural authority in favour of this change. Of course the architects of this day are bound to think that they build better than the architects of old, but we do not think so, and we prefer the relics of old to the best new edifices which can be made out of them. I see two or three Members who are connected with Yorkshire, and I ask them what they would think if Bolton Abbey and Fountains Abbey and Riveaulx Abbey were converted into modern churches, even if the work could be done by the late Mr. Steel or Mr. Pugin, or any other architect you like to name. I think it would be considered an absolute disaster to the whole county. But however important great ruins may be to Yorkshire, they are far more important to Scotland, because whereas in Yorkshire and other counties we have our glorious cathedrals—cathedrals which were, perhaps, improved by the Reformation, it may be said that the only opportunity the Scotch people have of experiencing that peculiar form of artistic and poetic enjoyment which is obtained by seeing a perfectly beautiful ecclesiastical building, is that afforded by these ruins. The right hon. Gentleman talked of the eloquent speech of my hon. Friend. No speech could be so eloquent as photographs of Dunblane Cathedral, which my hon. Friend has been showing on these Benches. It is quite clear from these photographs that Dunblane Cathedral has something of the beauty of Melrose, of Tintern, and of Glastonbury. Is it conceivable we should allow Melrose, Tintern, and Glastonbury to be altered into parish churches? Recollect that once this is done it cannot be undone. I will not enter into the constitutional question. I am sure the Board of Manufactures deserves the confidence the right hon. Gentleman reposes in it, but on the broad principle of preserving Dunblane Cathedral as it is, I think we should do well, although with great reluctance, to vote against the salary of the right hon. Gentleman.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 108, Noes 179.—(Division List, No. 123).

Original Question again proposed.

It being after ten minutes to seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

Committee also report progress; to sit again to-morrow.

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,—

House adjourned at five minutes after nine o'clock

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 7.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MAY 30.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 22nd May, 1889.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL (FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS).

Copy ordered, "of Statement of the proposed Financial Arrangements in connection with the Local Government (Scotland) Bill, 1889."—(*The Lord Advocate*).

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 160.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL (LICENSE DUTIES).

Copy ordered, "of Statements as to the License Duties, Probate Duty Grant, and Parliamentary Grants dealt with by the Local Government (Scotland) Bill."—(*The Lord Advocate*).

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 161.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

COAL DUTIES (LONDON) ABOLITION BILL. (No. 5.)

Order for Second Reading, read.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): I rise, Mr. Speaker, to a point of order. It is proposed by the hon. Member for the Barnard Castle Division of Durham (Sir J. Pease) to read a second time a Bill to alter the Charter rights and powers of the Corporation of London, and I wish to ask you, Sir, whether it is in accordance with the Standing Orders and practice of this House to alter the powers and Charter rights of a Corporation otherwise than by a private Bill? I submit, Sir, that it is not in accordance with the Standing Orders and practice of this House to alter the powers and Charter rights of a Corporation by a public Bill. I wish, therefore, to procure your ruling, as the point is one of great importance, and may in the future be of still greater importance.

*MR. SPEAKER: I understand the objection of the hon. Member to be that this Bill, inasmuch as it deals with the Charters and private rights of the Corporation of London ought to be proceeded with in the form of a private Bill. Since the Bill appeared on the Paper it has been carefully examined, and I have come to the conclusion that it may be properly introduced as a public Bill. This is in accordance with precedent, the chief of which was the precedent of 1864, on the introduction of the Weighing of Grain (Metropolis) Bill, when it was ruled that the question affected so large an area and was of such great public importance that it ought to be dealt with as a public and not as a private Bill. I may remind the hon. Member that the Coal Duties have been dealt with by Parliament in various ways from time to time since the Charters were first granted, and that the Charters themselves have been renewed by Act of Parliament. It therefore appears that the subject may properly be introduced in a public Bill. If it is thought that any private rights are affected, or that the statements in the long preamble of the Bill are not well founded, it is competent, in the event of the Bill being read a second time, for any Member to move that it be referred to a Committee

of any kind. If the House adopts that view and is of opinion that private rights are affected, the Bill may be referred to a Committee of the House, or to such a Committee with such powers as the House may appoint. What is the proper course to take, it is not for me to decide. That is a question which is in the hands of the House, but so far as the introduction of the Bill is concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that in accordance with precedent, the Bill has been properly introduced as a public Bill.

*Sir J. PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): Sir, you have been good enough to rule that the course I have taken in bringing forward this Bill as a public Bill is a correct course. I think I have some reason to complain that the hon. Member for Peckham (Mr. Baumann) had not the ordinary courtesy to make me acquainted with the fact that he intended to raise this objection to my mode of proceeding with this Bill. But after your ruling, Sir, I desire at once to go forward with the somewhat formidable task which I have undertaken in moving the Second Reading of this Bill. In the remarks which I propose to make upon the subject, I hope the House will bear in mind that I make no charge whatever against the manner in which the money derived from this tax has been spent by the Metropolitan Board of Works or by the City of London. That is quite outside my purview to-day, and I simply propose to treat this as a great public question, in which not only the Metropolis, but a very large surrounding area is concerned. It also concerns intimately the entire trade of the country, and especially the coal producing districts. The House will be aware that on the 5th of July next the last of a very long series of Continuation Acts, by which the sum of 1s. 1d. per ton levied upon coals coming into the Metropolitan Police area comes to an end. I am well aware that the revenue derived from this duty has been applied with the direct sanction of this House, both by the Metropolitan Board of Works and by the Corporation of the City of London to the carrying out of Metropolitan improvements, but nevertheless the object of my Bill is to prevent a renewal in any shape of this tax. There is a Bill at this moment before the House to renew these duties, but as it is set down for a Second Reading on the Derby day, the 5th of June, I presume that the hon. Gentleman who has charge of it sees very little hope of passing it, and that before that day it will probably be "scratched." As that is a Bill to renew the duties as they at present stand, I have no right to discuss its provisions now, and I propose to adhere strictly to the measure which I have the honour to introduce to the House. The Bill which I ask the House to read a second time provides that on the expiration of the Continuance Act of 1868, which expires this year, and which continued the power to levy and appropriate these duties for the seven years ending 5th July, 1889, all Coal Dues on all coals coming into the Metropolitan district shall cease. It specially provides that any powers which may be vested—and I doubt myself whether all such powers as are claimed would be found to be vested in the City Corporation in the event of any legal question arising. This Bill, however, provides that the powers vested in the Corporation of London by certain old Charters and Acts of Parliament shall not be revived. It is evident that they ought not to be revived, because they are contrary to the intentions of this House to the Reports of a series of Committees, to the views of eminent statesmen, to the general views of all who have studied the question, and to a direct vote of the newly elected County Council of London. All public men who have taken an interest in the question are of opinion that these duties ought not to be revived in any shape or way. The London County Council have already decided by a large majority—I think the numbers were 76 to 34, that these duties ought not to be levied in the Metropolitan Police area, although they would undoubtedly be materially assisted in the commencement of their labours by the large sum which the tax would produce. I think the public out of this House, as well as hon. Members in the House, ought to be made fully aware of the history of these imposts, the unfairness of their incidence, the manner in which Parliament has taken the absolute control over them, the evident intention of Parliament and statesmen that they should cease at an early date; and the manner in which

Mr. Speaker

any deficit, occasioned by the giving up of these duties, could and ought to be made up. The history of the Coal Duties is historically interesting, and I am afraid that it will be necessary to trouble the House at some length with the account which I have to give. I therefore ask for the indulgence of the House. I have gone carefully into the history of these duties. As far as my humble ability would permit I have made myself master of it, and I will endeavour to put it before the House in as few and as terse words as I can. By a Charter of James I., in the third year of his reign, 1606,—

"The King gave to the Mayor, Commonalty, and Citizens of London 'the office they have been accustomed to exercise,' the office of 'Measurer and Measuring' of all and singular coals, grains of every kind, and also of all kinds of salt, and all kinds of apples, pears, and plums, and other fruits whatsoever, and all eatable roots of every kind, 'and also of onions.' . . . brought into the Port of the said City of London, upon the said water of Thames, in every ship, boat, barge, or other vessel; and the King gave them all fees, wages, rewards, and profits belonging to the office of measurer and measuring."

No price is fixed in this Charter—but it is quoted through all documents as 4d. per chaldron of 25 cwts, and as 4d. per ton, and then it is quoted as 4d. per ton. The Committee of 1861 report that up to 1785 the Corporation appointed meters who paid £80 for their office and who took 4d. per ton as their fee. The right of the citizens to this charge seems to have been established even before the Charter of James I., 1606, as Maitland in his *History of London* says, that the right having been contested by the Lord High Admiral was confirmed to the citizens by Queen Elizabeth, 1591. In 1614 Sir Edward Coke, the Attorney General, filed an information against the Corporation, who pleaded their prescriptive title. Coke allowed judgment to go against the Crown. The next Charter affecting this question is another of James I., in 1615 (the 12th year of his reign). This gave the Mayor, commonalty, and citizens 8d. per ton "for the weighing of every like ton of coal as aforesaid, and of all other coal weighable." Like the 4d., it was confined to coals brought on to the waters of the Thames, and like it was limited to the river between Staines Bridge and Yenleete on the Medway. The next step in these duties is not by Charter, but by an Act of 5th and 6th, William and Mary, which made provision to raise for the orphans and other creditors of the City of London, from and after June 24, 1694, 4d. metage "for ever, over, and above what was then lawfully paid for metage," to be paid "in like manner as the then present duty for metage was or had been accustomed to be paid." This made James I. first Charter Duty of 4d. actually into 8d. for ever on metage. By the same statute of William and Mary "6d. per chaldron, and for all coals sold by the ton 6d. also" was given to the Corporation, to be levied after the 29th September 1700, for 50 years, expiring in 1750. Therefore, if the coals were measured, there was to be paid to the Corporation under James's first Charter, 1606, 4d., and under William and Mary's Act, 1694, 4d., making a total of 8d; and if the coals were weighed there was to be paid under James's second Charter, 1615, 8d., and under William and Mary's Act from 1700 to 1750, 6d. per ton, making a total of 1s. 2d. for weighing. William and Mary's 6d., which would have expired in 1750, was renewed by Acts of George II. and George III. The Act of 1829 (10 George IV., chap. 136), Clause 72, the London Bridge Approaches Act renewed it from 5th July, 1837, for 21 years to 5th July, 1858. That Act recites that the Orphan Fund named by William and Mary had been "annihilated," that other creditors of City would be paid by April, 1832—and it further continued the 6d. until it should have provided for the payment of £1,000,000 raised for new London Bridge approaches and it was calculated that this would take place in 1858. It will be noticed that the 4d. and the 6d. of William and Mary were taken from mere city purposes for a public improvement, and when that was accomplished they were to cease. That was the view of Parliament 60 years ago, in 1829, when possession was taken of it for London Bridge purposes. I come now to a still more important Act—the Act of 1831. It ordered coals to be sold by weight. It also liberated the Corporation from the duty of weighing and placed it on the sellers of coal, and it gave the Corporation a right to collect 1s. per ton on all coals brought into the port to be applied as the 4d. of James (metage) was to be applied, and as the

sums of 4d. and 6d. of William and Mary were applied. Clause 60 of the Act, 1831, recites that—

"During the term hereinafter mentioned, one Rate or Duty shall be paid to the said Mayor, and in lieu of all Rates and Duties payable to them in respect of coals, &c., except the Rates and Duties payable under this Act."

It is to be observed that in that clause, after reciting the various Acts and Charters, it enacts that during seven years from the 31st December, 1831, the Corporation shall not

"exercise any right of measuring or weighing, and that the rate of 12d. per ton shall be collected in the manner hereinafter mentioned, and the sum of 4d. for every ton or part thereof shall be applied in the same manner as the sum in the said Charters mentioned to be payable for metage would be applicable, and the sum of 8d. for every ton residue thereof shall be applied in the same manner as the said Duties, of 4d. per chaldron, and 6d. for every chaldren or ton made payable by the said Act of Parliament (William and Mary's) would be applicable."

The 8d. per ton for weighing in James I. 2nd Charter is not mentioned in the enacting portion, and forms no part of any sum collected since 31st December, 1831. This Act limited the enjoyment of the 1s. to seven years—4d. having been already allocated to London Bridge after the Orphan Fund was paid off—by the London Bridge Act of 1829, and 6d. having been also allocated to the same object by the same Act to refund £1,000,000. But the Act of 1831 contained Clause 61 and other clauses, which reserved the rights of the Corporation at the expiration of the term—or whenever the sum of 1s. should cease to be paid, and Clause 64 reserved 1s. 3d. duties paid on coals arriving by the Grand Junction and other canals. By an Act (47 Geo. III., chap. 68) 1d. per ton on coals was granted for building a new Coal Exchange in London. The 13d. of the present day is thus before us. The 4d. metage and the 6d. weighing of Willliam and Mary (coals could not be both weighed and measured) was made into 8d. by the Act of 1831. James I. metage was continued at 4d., and in addition there was a charge of 1d. for the Coal Exchange, making 13d. altogether. This was all limited to seaborne or canal-borne coals. What have been the complaints against this tax? There are three areas. The ratable area is 700 square miles, and extends from Waltham Cross on the north to Epsom on the south, from Dartford on the east to Staines on the west. From 1851 to 1861, it was still wider—extending to Hertford on the north, Gatton (near Reigate) on the south, Northfleet on the east, and Staines on the west. The 1d. 1d. is raised on the Metropolitan Police area; thus the 9d. raised on 700 square miles is spent on 120 square miles of the Board of Works area. There is also the City area of one square mile, thus 4d. raised over 700 square miles has been spent on one square mile—except in the last year when all was spent on freeing the bridges. Nothing can be more unjust and inequitable than the way in which the tax is levied. It embraces areas already incorporated, such as West Ham, where the tax is equal to 16d. in the pound in addition to all the other taxes. Whilst Parliaments have specifically allocated the Coal Dues, and enacted that any balance must be spent as Parliament may sanction, the balances have been spent and no sanction obtained. Mr. Fardell, the Chairman of the Finance Committee of the deceased Metropolitan Board, said on December 22, 1886:—"It is undoubtedly the fact that the Coal and Wine Duties have not been specifically hypothecated to the Boards since 1865." When the Board of Works died the London County Council, by 76 to 34, resolved against this tax. But the great complaints are:—1st. That it is a tax on one of the primary necessaries of life; 2ndly. That is a duty of 10 per cent on the poor man's coal, and on gas and manufacturing coal, and only 4 per cent on the rich man's coal; 3rdly. The people of the North complain of it as damaging employment in the coal fields. It is a most serious detriment to all those trades in London that consume coal. Taking it as a tax, Mr. Boulton, of the London Chamber of Commerce, in a speech the other day, gave instances of the way it increases on the ratable value of premises; in one case by 1s. 10d. in the pound, in another 2s. 6d., in a third 2s. 11d., and in his own case 4s. 4d., where for each 2s. he spends in labour he spends 1s. for coal. How do the burdens fall? Mr. Boulton says:—"A Hertford blacksmith uses 15 tons of coal, and adds 2s. in the £ to his rates." Mr. Boulton's office in the City burns 19 tons of coal, and is rated at £1664, and pays £1 in added rates.

The Gas Companies complain of the tax. The three Metropolitan Companies and 12 Suburban Companies in 1886 used 2,650,393 tons of coal, and paid, after receiving drawbacks, £128,000—namely, for coke £33,000, and for gas £95,000. The Gas Companies being at the limit of their dividends under the sliding scale, all savings would go one-fifth to the Companies and four-fifths to the consumers. Then, again, how does the tax affect the London sugar refiners? One says that the Coal Duties add 13s. in the £ to the ratable value of his premises, and another that they add 17s. 6d. in the £. Should the tax on 7,000,000 tons of railway coals and 5,000,000 tons of sea-borne coals be repealed, the money will go into the ratepayers' pockets. In direct cheaper coals and in direct cheaper gas they will receive it; and the incidence of taxation, even if more direct rates are to be paid, will be much fairer. It is done without detriment to the poor and without injury to the manufacturer. The ratepayers will probably have to pay increased rates amounting to 2d. in the pound, to make up for the withdrawal of this duty.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER: Fourpence in the pound.

MR. W. H. LAWSON: The actual increase is 2¾d. in the pound.

*SIR J. PEASE: I find that my own rates will be increased 2½d. in the pound by the extinction of the duty, but whatever the addition, the tax will be more equitable than the Coal Dues, and every man who buys coals should see that in paying for them he has the advantage of the 1s. 1d. which will be taken off. Twenty years hence, no one will believe, without reference to this history, that in London—the centre of financial ability—a tax for improvements was levied for the whole of the earlier part of the enlightened 19th Century, which fell more heavily upon the poor than on the rich ["No"] upon an article of primary domestic use and comfort, by a tax which damaged all commercial industries, and was opposed to the interests of the great staple trade of the North. Now, Sir, I desire to show how completely Parliament has kept its hand over these duties, and how it has always been in the purview of this House that at an early date these duties should cease. London Bridge Act of 1829 continued the 6d. of William and Mary for 21 years (Sec. 72) and limited the appropriation of 4d. The Act of 1831 liberated the Corporation from weighing or measuring. It made William and Mary's 10d. into 8d.; it added the 4d. of James I.'s first Charter; it ignored entirely James's 8d. for weighing, and it only granted the 1s. for seven years, having already, by the London Bridge Act (10 Geo. IV., 136) charged the 6d. of William and Mary until 1858, as well as the 4d. of James. The Act of 1861 took a much stronger hold of these duties. Clause 2 authorizes the 1s. 1d. to be levied for 10 years. As regards the original 4d. of James, it specifically allocated that to the Corporation to wipe out £300,000 and £240,000 raised for the Cannon Street improvement, and after that the amount to be dealt with as Parliament may sanction. It allocated the remaining 9d. first to the London Bridge Approach Fund, then to the Thames Embankment, next to the Metropolitan Improvement Fund, and then as Parliament may determine. Therefore, Parliament strictly defined the objects to which the money was to be applied; and it went further, and said that it would keep under its own hands any balance there might remain. By Clause 10 the rights of the Corporation are again reserved, as in the Act of 1831. In this Act Parliament deals with the appropriation of the City 4d., with the balance of 9d., and reserves entire control over any balance in hand. By the Act of 1863 the dues are again continued for 10 years from 1872 to 1882, and Parliament took a still stronger hold of the reins. Ninepence was to be paid to the Commissioners of the Treasury for the Thames Embankment and Metropolitan Improvement Fund; the 4d. was to go to the Corporation for Holborn improvements or those in or adjacent to the City, and then, again, any balance was to be dealt with as Parliament may sanction. I have shown by the Act of 1861, and more especially so by the Act of 1863, that the control of Parliament has been exercised over every penny of this tax; the appropriation has been specific and the time limited. I now come to a much more important matter — the Act of 1868, which continued the levy of the dues from 1882—

not for 15 years as was done in 1845, or for 10 years as was provided in other Acts, but for only seven years—until, in fact, the 6th July, 1889. At that time, Sir, the subject of Metropolitan taxation was attracting great attention, and the inequality and injustice of the coal tax was complained of; I will refer for a moment to the Report of the Committee of 1866. This Committee—on the Local Government and Local Taxation of London—appointed in March, 1866, consisted of 15 Members, all of them highly respected in this House. I think every one of them has now passed away either from this House or from this earth. On the 12th April, 1866, the Committee voted on the draft Report of the Chairman, Mr. Ayrton, which condemned the Coal and Wine Dues and proposed their immediate abolition. An Amendment was moved by a nobleman of whom every one will, I am sure, speak with the greatest respect—the present Duke of Rutland—then Lord John Manners, to the effect "That the Coal and Wine Duties might beneficially be continued for a further limited period." Now, those who voted for the abolition of the duties were—Mr. Bazley, Mr. Baring, Mr. Stuart Mill, and Mr. Locke. Six voted for the Amendment—Mr. Tite, Mr. Lawrence, Sir M. W. Ridley, Mr. Sandford, Lord John Manners, and Mr. Kekewich. There were absent—Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Beecroft, Mr. Turner, and Sir W. P. Gallwey. Thus, out of 15 Members, five were for abolition, six were for a limited period, and four stayed away. Mr. Ayrton did not vote for his own paragraph. The continuance—thus carried by the majority in favour of Lord John Manners' Amendment—was not for fifteen years as in 1845, or ten years as in 1861 and 1863, but the limited period was reduced to seven years, and it was understood by all that then these duties should cease entirely. I want, Sir, to call the attention of the House to some rather curious evidence which tends to show what was the intention at the time even in the City of London. Mr. Fry, the Chairman of the Holborn Valley Improvement Committee stated to the Committee of this House:—

"I hope the Committee will agree with me in the absolute necessity of our receiving from Parliament a continuance of Coal Dues, or rather that we should be allowed to appropriate our 4d. Coal Dues for another period of ten years, as without it the Holborn Valley Improvement will be altogether incomplete."

Now, Sir, by the Act of 1866 9d. was left with the Metropolitan Board, 4d. again went to the City, and the balance in both cases was to be dealt with again as Parliament might sanction. But this House went still further in the Act of 1868. In the last year ending the 5th July, 1889, the entire toll was taken from the Corporation and from the Metropolitan Board of Works and applied by Clause 5 during that last year not to any works even within the Metropolitan Police District or in the City, but to the tolls on Kew, Kingston, Staines, Hampton Court, and Walton Bridges, and after those were disposed of, then to getting rid of the tolls on certain bridges on the Lea—namely, those at Tottenham and Chingford, and then—and here there is a curious alteration in the phraseology—the balance is to be applied not as Parliament may "sanction," but as Parliament shall direct. Now, Sir, no complaint can arise that those who, under these Acts, were to receive the tolls have not been fairly dealt with. At the time of the renewal in 1861, the 9d. produced £161,600; at the renewal in 1863 it was £168,900; in 1868, £184,396; and in 1884 it had reached £302,787, while in 1887 it was stated by the Chairman of the Finance Committee to have amounted to £325,000. It has, therefore, always been an increasing quantity in favour of those who had the use of it. Again, the City 4d. in 1861 netted £36,505; in 1863, £75,081; in 1868, £81,953; and in 1884, £134,572; no doubt it now totals £140,000 a year. Now I come more particularly to the point to which I desire to draw the attention of the House, and that is, that every claim on this tax which Parliament has laid on the Coal Dues has been specifically met and dealt with. The only question is, I think, as regards the Holborn Valley improvement. With regard to that the City of London may have some claim for consideration; at the same time, I do not see how they can levy for a much longer period a tax over 700 square miles in order to pay for that. If that were the only question under consideration, I should be very glad to make some allowance

to the City. Every claim has, I think, been met except that; and I do not think my hon. Friends who have distributed a whip asking the House to continue this tax for a further limited period—the latter words being a blacker type than the rest of the document—will deny that the claim is but a limited one. Nobody will say that the improvements which have been made have not been very beneficial. But I say that the money for them could be better and more fairly raised. It ought to be raised in the same way as other Corporations raise their money; it should be raised by a fair levy on the house property of the people living in the district. Now, as regards the rights of the Corporation. I have heard many eminent lawyers aver that no portion of these duties could go back to the City; that they were granted to the Corporation of London as conservators of the River Thames, and as the conservancy of the River Thames has been taken away from the Corporation under the Act of 1857, all rights to these duties pass with them. However, that is only an opinion. I would also point out that the receipt of the duties is coupled with services which can no longer be rendered. Under the Reservation Clause, of the Act of 1831, taking it in the most favourable way, the Corporation under that claim a revival of their duties, and it is to prevent any question of the revival of these duties that I ask that this Bill shall receive a Second Reading and pass into law. What rights could be revived? I believe that the right to tax railway-borne coal in the great majority of cases expires with the Continuance Acts on the 5th July, 1889. That does away with almost the whole of the duties on 7,000,000 tons of coal. But perhaps this is not quite an accurate statement. I find, after a great deal of research, that in two or three earlier private Acts of Parliament affecting the Great Western, South Western, South Eastern, Great Eastern, and the London and North Western Railways, a clause was inserted giving the City rights over these railways. I also find after legal research that the London and North Western Clause has been repealed, and therefore the levy would only be on the Great Western, South Western, South Eastern, and Great Eastern, who alone could be called upon to pay the tax. The tax is at present levied under the public Act of 1845, which says that coal brought into London by any railway constructed after that Act or before the passing of it, is to bear the City Dues for 15 years, and thus the dues having been continued will expire on the 5th July next. Whether that clause embraces the other railway companies that I have named or not, I cannot say. But I must point out that if certain railway companies are to be freed from the duties, the other railway companies will be heavily handicapped, and the tax would also handicap the Mercantile Marine, especially that on the North East Coast, if you allow the continuance of an 8d. duty on sea-borne coal, and allow the railway companies, or some of them, to escape paying any Coal Duties. That is a description of competition which this House would be the last body in the world to desire to sanction. Now, the right to William and Mary's sixpence was granted till 1750, and it was renewed in various Acts until the London Bridge Act 10, George IV., cap. 136, which continued it until the 5th July, 1858. That, again, has been renewed specifically from time to time until the date of 1889 is a substitute for that of 1858. Therefore, the claim of the City for weighing can only be made by virtue of the two Charters of James I. As regards the first Charter of James I., there is power to levy 4d. for metage, and there is power to levy another 4d. for metage, under the Act of William and Mary; making eightpence together. Metage is now declared illegal in the City of London by Act of Parliament, but I am advised the Corporation of London could enforce their dues for metage if they offer to exercise the office of measurers or measuring. But then there is the eightpence levied under the second Charter of James I. for weighing coal. That has been in abeyance from the Act of 1831 until the present day. Now, we do not want to lead to a revival of the old and obsolete mode of measuring coals, which Committees have over and over again declared is the worst possible way of dealing with coal, and there are very curious records in the Library of this House, which show how coal was often broken up small to make it measure

out more largely. Now, whatever rights the City may have—if they have not passed them to the Thames Conservators—it is certain that they cannot both weigh coals and measure them; their claim must consequently be confined to the eightpence for one service. Under the present law the seller is responsible for weighing the coals, and those Members who have read the London Coal Vend Acts can see how carefully they are drawn, so that no duty can possibly devolve upon the Coporation, either as measurers or weighers, and the thing is provided for to be done in more modern and convenient ways. If we gave the City this eightpence we should have no legal control over it, as we have had during the last 30 or 40 years. It is an unreformed Corporation. Some of its accounts are, I believe, submitted to Parliament; but the Corporation would be able to do as they liked with this revenue. That is one great objection. I think I have pretty well explained the position of the City in this matter. You cannot allow all the gas supplied to all the district outside the City to be taxed for City purposes only. Sea-borne coal amounts to about five million tons, and all this will be taxed if you allow the revival of these Charter rights. I say that if these public improvements are wanted there are far better ways of raising the money than by taxing coal, which is such an essential to manufacturing industries, and such a comfort to the people of London. I want to show the House how this matter has been looked at by those wise men who have from time to time been delegated to look into the question. In 1836 there was a Select Committe on the Coal Trade, which reported that the trade in coals was evidently intended to be left free as regards the River Thames. On page 26 of their Report I find—

"By a statement from the Chamberlain's Office it appears that the application of the surplus of the dues continued unappropriated by the Act of 10 George IV., will pay off all the charges for public works, &c., by the 5th January, 1855, and relieve the coals from that charge, and your Committee expresses the hope that no charge may be imposed to render the continuance of the City Coal Duty necessary beyond the time stated."

In 1838 the Committee went still further, and said—

"With regard to the duty of 8d. per ton on coals imported into the port of London, applicable to public improvement, your Committee are of opinion that the said duty should cease after the monies borrowed on the duties shall have been paid off. . . . . In the Act of 1 and 2 William IV., cap. 76, it is also provided that if it is suffered to expire, or repealed, the right of the City to all their former dues and privileges shall revive. Your Committee have no hesitation in saying that it should be most inexpedient to allow this to happen, as from the evidence which they have received they are satisfied that the system of selling coals by weight is better than that of selling them by measure, and likewise that the dues now exacted are less burdensome and vexatious to the public than various charges which were before levied under the authority of the City."

I have already alluded to the Committee of 1866, which, by a majority of only one, adopted the clause of Lord John Manners to continue the dues for another seven years. But there is another, a Royal Commission that sat in 1854, composed of the late Mr. Labouchere, Sir G. Cornewall Lewis, and Sir John Patteson, and that Commission expressed a strong opinion entirely opposed to the continuance of the City Dues. We have during the last few years had this question continually brought under the notice of Ministers. I have here a letter from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian to Sir J. McGarel Hogg, in which he says:—

"You are quite right in reminding me that the time has arrived when the Metropolitan Board of Works may justly expect from the Government a definitive statement of their intentions with reference to the proposal to liberate certain bridges from toll by pledging for a further period the Coal and Wine Duties, so as to make their collection at a comparatively remote date available as a basis for a present loan. The Government has shared the desire of the Board to liberate the bridges, but has also felt more strongly than the Board that there are grave objections to the proposed method of providing the money. At the time of our former communications we took into view the possibility, though we could give no pledge on the subject, that we would be enabled, in dealing with the subject of local taxation, to open some new source of supply, and thus to put the Board in a position to attain its end without encountering these grave objections, and the resistance in which they might take form. But we have been obliged to abandon all hopes of the kind in reference to the present year, and if the House definitely adopts by vote the leading propositions of the Budget, it will determine its own attitude in the same sense. I am obliged, however, to say that, reluctant as we are to postpone the consideration of a design so useful as the liberation of the bridges, we could not be parties to the proposals made by the Board, and we perceive no

other course that can be taken than the adjournment of the subject until means can be found for the extinction of the tolls in some manner less open to objection, and less likely to provoke resistance."

Then I have another letter to Sir James McGarel Hogg, in 1875, from the late Lord Iddesleigh, then Sir Stafford Northcote, in which he says—

"Numerous representations have been made to us by individuals and by Corporations liable to pay the Coal and Wine Dues, but not included within the area of the Metropolitan Board, to the effect that they will derive no benefit from the contemplated expenditure; that the extension of the Coal Duty will affect them injuriously; and that, not being represented on the Board, they have no means of protecting themselves against proposals for increased taxation."

In a letter in 1879, Sir Stafford Northcote said:—

"I regret to say that I do not find myself able to agree to the proposal, and feel still, as I felt when a similar request was made to me in 1875, that there is much objection to anticipating by so many years a decision which should be taken by the Government and the Legislature when the time of the expiry of the present term is near at hand; and I do not think now, as I did not think then, that the circumstances of the case are sufficient to obviate that objection."

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, in a speech he made in this House on the London Government Bill, said:—

"During that time (my earliest experiences as a Cabinet Minister) the noble scheme of the Embankment was projected, and the Government desired its execution, but they saw no means of providing the funds, except by the prolongation of the Wine and Coal Dues, and they would not take up the scheme because, in the opinion of the Conservative Government, the operation of those dues was intolerable.

I hold in my hand another document which has been brought before the House, and I will only allude to it shortly. It is a Treasury Minute which has been circulated amongst Members, and it depreciates the renewal of these dues. It is signed by the Chairman of Ways and Means. Then, Sir, there is the very celebrated memorandum of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington, in which he says:—

"Of course you cannot deny that there are objections to a tax of this kind of a very formidable nature. It is, in the first place, a tax on a necessary of life, and not only is it a tax on a necessary of life, thereby involving principles of taxation which we in this country have long sought to get rid of, but it is a very high tax."

Later on the noble Lord says:—

"I think you will agree with me that for a tax of that kind, before a responsible Government can make itself a party to asking Parliament to renew such a tax, it is necessary that you should place that Government in a position to show a case for expenditure which you mean to meet by the resources of this tax of overwhelming urgency, or you must show that the more legitimate resources of taxation are either not available or have been exhausted."

Then the noble Lord goes on to comment on the very insidious nature of the tax. He says:—

"You are able by means of these duties to undertake colossal enterprises, to borrow money with a right heart, to pay the interest on the money which you borrow easily, but the capital which you borrow thus easily is charged on the rates."

Still further on he says:—

"I would point out that, without any doubt whatever, an equal rate upon property for public objects is far less objectionable for the purpose of raising money than a tax upon a necessary of life. So much less objectionable is it, that I know of no objection which can be brought against an equal rate upon property or public objects, and I know of no objection which cannot be brought against a tax on a necessary of life."

I think I have made out my case. I have shown that the history of the tax is one which points very strongly to an early termination of the tax. I have shown how very unequal and unjust is the incidence of the tax, and I have shown that the only Committee who, having seriously considered the question, passed a clause at all in favour of the continuance of the dues, was one in which Lord John Manners moved that the tax should only be continued for a limited period, that it was with the consent of Lord John Manners that the tax was only continued for seven years, and that the seven years should end in the year with which I have now the honour of addressing the House. The object of my Bill is to prevent the London Corporation by a side wind imposing dues of a prejudicial and obsolete character upon the industries of the Metropolis, and upon the poor of the Metropolis, in double proportion to the rich. Whilst I am quite ready to hear anything the Corporation have to say for themselves I think the day has come when Parliament should pass this Bill, the Second Reading of which I now beg to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir J. Pease.*)

*Sir R. N. FOWLER (London): I am anxious to say a few words with regard to the position which the Corporation of the City take upon this subject. I do not propose to move the rejection of the Bill, but to support the Motion which stands in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for Peckham (Mr. Baumann). I do not think it is necessary to follow the hon. Baronet (Sir. J. Pease) into the history of these dues, but it is right I should point out that the Bill comes before us as a measure which is entirely supported by the colliery interest. The Bill is a Durham Bill, and it comes before the House because it will be a great advantage to that district if the Coal Dues cease. This has been shown by the petition presented by my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Wharton), the Chairman of the Durham County Council. I have, however, to look at this question as it affects the interests of the Metropolis. The Corporation have always taken one line on the subject of the dues, which they consider are of great advantage to the Metropolis, although the County Council seems to take a rather different view. The Corporation believe that the large majority of the people of the Metropolis, as represented by their Members in the House of Commons, take the same view as we do, and we are not, therefore, prepared to dissociate ourselves from those representatives. I do not think it would be disputed that there will be a large increase in the rates if the dues are abolished. Let me give some statistics to show that there has already been a rise in rates owing to the approaching cessation of the tax. I find that in the present half-year there is an increase in Bow (St. Mary, Stratford) of 2d.; Islington (St. Mary), ¾d.; Limehouse (St. Ann), 2d.; Hampstead (St. John), 3d.; Hackney (St. John), 7d.; Shoreditch (St. Leonard), 1d.; St. Pancras, 5d.; St. Giles-in-the-Fields, 6d.; St. Martins-in-the-Fields, 3d.; St. James's, Westminster, 2d.; Southwark (Christchurch), 6½d.; Putney, 8d.; Wandsworth, 9d.; Camberwell, 5d.; Newington, 1d.; St. George, Hanover Square, 4½d.; St. Luke, Middlesex, 4½d.; Whitechapel, increase not known; St. Margaret and St. John, Westminster, 1d.; Lambeth, 10d.; St. John, Horsleydown, 3d.; and St. Mary, Battersea, 5½d.

Mr. STUART: Will the right hon. Baronet say how much the increase is due to the cessation of the Coal Dues?

*Sir R. N. FOWLER: The hon. Member knows that the dues are about to expire, and the hon. Baronet (Sir J. Pease has stated that his own rates have been raised.

*Mr. H. L. W. LAWSON: It is a uniform charge.

*Sir R. N. FOWLER: The hon. Member will have an opportunity of answering me. Now, the ratable value of the Metropolitan area, including the City, last year was nearly £31,000,000. A rate of 3¾d. on this amount—making allowance for empty houses and cost of collection—would produce £435,750. The Coal Dues produced last year £450,000 It will therefore be seen what rate would be required to make up for the loss which would be experienced by the cessation of the Coal Dues. We have heard a good many pathetic appeals with regard to the price which is paid for coal. Let us look at the case of a householder occupying a house rated at £150 a year, and burning 72,000 ft. of gas and 20 tons of coal per annum. One penny per 1,000 ft. saved on the gas amounts to 6s., and 1s. 1d. a ton on the coal amounts to £1 1s. 8d.—a total saving of £1 7s. 8d. An additional rate of 3¾d. on his house amounts to £2 6s. 10d., showing a loss to him by the abolition of the dues of 19s. 2d. A householder rated at £50 a year and consuming 25,000 ft. of gas and eight tons of coal would suffer a loss of 4s. 10½d. It is said that the abolition of the dues will bring about a reduction in the price of gas. We know that the gas companies are exceedingly anxious that the Bill should pass. Of the whole amount of the present duty the gas companies together pay about £125,000 annually, or a little over one quarter, but their payment of this duty is taken into consideration when under their different Acts their sliding scale of dividend is made to depend upon the particular scale of charges as fixed by those Acts, so that before this Bill can become law it will be necessary to revise those scales. This is a point which deserves the consideration of the House. It must be obvious

that a large increase of rates must follow the abolition of the dues, and hon. Members who have advocated the cessation of the tax will have that increase thrown in their faces when they come to solicit re-election. My hon. Friend freely admitted the great benefits conferred on the Metropolis in consequence of the employment, both by the Corporation of the City and the Metropolitan Board of Works, of the money acquired from these dues. Whatever may be said of some individual members of the old Board of Works — whose conduct we all very much deprecate —there can be no doubt that improvements which did great credit to the Board have been carried out by that body. The Corporation of the City have, with money derived from the dues, also carried out great improvements, including the construction of the Holborn Viaduct. The Corporation were encouraged by a former Parliament to make the improvement at Holborn, and a hope was held out that these dues might be renewed for the purpose of enabling them to make it. The Corporation have, I think, a claim to the consideration of the House if all these dues are to be suddenly cut off, if ancient rights are to be disturbed, and if we are not to be allowed to carry on great improvements in reliance upon an ancient source of revenue. We do not see why we should give up any of the rights we possess, especially considering the admirable manner in which the money derived from this source of revenue has been employed by us.

*MR. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street): I think it is scarcely necessary for me to go over the ground which has been so well occupied by my hon. Friend the Member for the Bernard Castle Division of the County of Durham (Sir J. Pease). I think that his arguments are unanswerable, and I wait with great interest to hear what hon. Members who are opposed to this Bill have to say in reply to the very strong case he has presented to the House. I listened somewhat with surprise to the accusation which has been made against my hon. Friend by the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London (Sir R. Fowler)—namely, that this Bill has been promoted in the interests of the Durham coalowners. I think that, at all events, whatever may be said by other representatives of the House, certainly the hon. Baronet is not the man to make a charge of that kind. Whom does he represent? He represents the City of London, which, at the present time, receives something like a third of the whole of the Coal Dues, and that one-third is received entirely in the interest of one square mile out of the 700 over which the tax is collected. The right hon. Baronet said there would be an increase of taxation to the extent of 4d. in the £ if these dues were abolished. I am rather surprised that he has not been better advised by his hon. Friends in this House and out of it who were members of the Metropolitan Board of Works, for, if I remember rightly, in the Report which was given to this House in 1886 by the Metropolitan Board of Works, it was distinctly stated that if these dues were abolished the increase of the rates over the area where they are collected would be only 2½d. in the £, and if hon. Members will take the trouble to compare the rates paid by London with those paid by other large towns, they will find that London is very much less rated than such towns as Birmingham, Newcastle, and many other large towns, which have, by means of their ordinary rating powers, made all the improvements that they thought they ought to make. We do not object in the slightest degree to the improvements which have been referred to by the hon. Baronet. We believe the improvements will not cease, but that they will continue even if these dues are abolished. What we maintain is, that the very poorest people in this Metropolis should not bear a very unfair proportion of the taxation in order to make these improvements. Then the hon. Baronet stated that we certainly had the support of the gas companies, but he is evidently not aware of the statements that have been made by those representing the gas companies. I have a letter in my possession from the Chairman of the North Metropolitan Gas Company, who ought to be no mean authority on this question, in which he says—and he made the same statement at one of the half-yearly meetings of the company—that the South Metropolitan Gas Company is prepared to give the whole advantage of the remission of this taxation to the consumers of its gas.

The hon. Baronet knows perfectly well that there is an arrangement in the shape of a sliding scale, and that if the gas is reduced 2d. per thousand feet the companies are empowered to pay a small additional percentage. The Chairman of the South Metropolitan Company makes it perfectly clear that they will give the whole benefit to the consumers of gas, and that they will not increase their dividend under any circumstances owing to a remission of this taxation. There is one point which I think is a strong argument in favour of this Bill which was not put by my hon. Friend the Member for Barnard Castle. We all admit that there is a great inequality in connection with this tax, but what I maintain is that if these City Dues are abolished and the old tax of eight pence per ton is substituted by the Corporation it will create even greater inequalities than exist at the present time. In the first place this tax will be paid almost entirely by the seaborne coal, and I think it is not fair that the North Country coal-producing districts should be handicapped to the extent of eightpence a ton. But there is another point worthy of consideration. At present this taxation is levied on a particular area surrounding the City of London where this coal is sold, but there is in existence a drawback which every coal merchant gets if the coal goes beyond this area. For instance, if it goes, as at present, in large quantities to such towns as Tunbridge Wells, Romford, and various other large towns surrounding the particular area, a drawback of one shilling per ton is allowed. This Bill is intended to prevent people who have no representation whatever, and yet who live beyond the area of the present taxation, from having a fresh tax of eight pence a ton inflicted upon them. Again, all the large steamship companies which coal in London have at the present time a drawback of a shilling a ton on the coals they take, but if this power is continued to the Corporation without the abolition of the dues this drawback will be withheld, and consequently all the coals which are reported, and all the coals which are used by these large steamship companies will be obliged to pay a tax of eightpence a ton more than they are accustomed to pay. Consequently there will be an actual increase of taxation if this Bill is not passed, and I for one have the very strongest objection to it. I know there are some who say that it is all in the interest of the coalowners who supply London. Anyone who knows really how the coal trade is carried on knows that a man who sells coal in London not only puts down the cost of the coal, but takes into consideration the freight and the City Dues. I should like to see the large coalowner who, in the event of this 1s. 1d. being swept away would dare to make an attempt to put on 1s. 1d. a ton and put it in his own pocket. What would be the result? The competition of his neighbours is so severe that he could never secure a contract. I know also that many say the consumers do not pay the tax. There is one very simple illustration which will put this clearly before the House; suppose a ship is being loaded, every ton that goes into that ship increases her displacement in the water. In my opinion exactly the same holds good with regard to taxation, and if you put a penny in the shape of taxation on any article which is consumed in London, I maintain that that penny will not be paid by those who have to sell, but by the actual consumer. One cannot impress too strongly on the House in dealing with this question, the disadvantages which arise to large as well as small consumers of coal. I remember being present when a deputation waited, I think, on the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to this question, and I was particularly struck with the statement made by one of the largest sugar refiners. He said that the tax to him represented something like £2,000 a year. When we find Gentlemen opposite going through London and urging upon Her Majesty's Government to press forward the Sugar Convention Bill, and giving as one of their great reasons for it, the competition caused by bounty-fed sugar to sugar refiners. I am rather surprised they should be found speaking in favour of continuing a tax which represents something like £2,000 per annum to one sugar refiner alone. We have seen in London one large industry after another disappear. Why? Simply because we find that the competition in other parts of the country is greater. At one time you had a large number of important shipbuilding yards upon the

Thames. What has become of them? They have been cut out because other yards on the Tyne and the Clyde can produce cheaper. The yards on the Thames have not only to pay an additional price in freight upon every ton of coal they consume, but you actually put a tax on their coal of 1s. 1d. additional. Undoubtedly, to look at this it is a disadvantage to the shipbuilders, but the real pinch comes upon those who are employed by the shipbuilders. It is the poor of the Metropolis who suffer from this unjust tax. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, I am willing to hear a refutation from those who dispute that statement, but I think they will have some difficulty in making good their case to the satisfaction of the country, and apart from any interest such as that which the hon. Baronet (Sir R. Fowler) has in view, I am certain of this, that unless this tax is abolished a great injustice will be continued, not only upon manufacturers, but upon all those whom manufacturers employ. We are often reminded of the great amount of distress in the East End of London in consequence of their being a lack of employment; but how are you to expect that a capitalist will invest his capital in factories within an area where he has to pay an additional tax of 1s. 1d. on his coals, when he can go to the Tyne or anywhere outside the boundary of the tax and there establish his works. Of course, you cannot blame the capitalist or the manufacturer, but it tells severely against the great mass of the population at the East End who cannot find employment. These imposts are swept away elsewhere, and it is only in the Metropolis that they survive to any extent.

*MR. R. G. WEBSTER: I rise to a point of order—[Order, order!] The hon. Member states that in no other part of the country—[Order, order!]—

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not raising a point of order.

*MR. JOICEY: I will not say there is not a similar instance here and there, in such places as Brighton, where the duty still exists.

*MR. R. G. WEBSTER: There are 200 cases.

*MR. JOICEY: If there are so many, then the sooner the 200 are disposed of the better. I think you are just as much entitled to put a tax upon the food consumed by the people as you are upon the coal consumed by the poor, for coal is almost as much a necessity of existence as food. The same arguments that hold good for the support of this tax would apply to a protective duty on grain, but I should like to see the hon. Gentleman who will get up and advocate a tax of that kind, however much in the agricultural interest they would be disposed to look favourably on such a suggestion. I need not detain the House further; there are others probably who will debate this question with more force. I have put one or two facts before the House in opposition to this tax, and in support of my argument that it is an unjust tax, that it is against the interest of the poor in London, that it is an unfair burden upon an industry in which Durham is interested, and the only way in which Durham is interested, is that the cheaper an article, the larger the consumption. That is the only interest the Durham coal trade has in the subject. I challenge hon. Gentlemen who are interested in the Metropolis to show how else we are affected. I am opposed to these duties as to a relic of an old time system that ought to be swept away, because it represents a burden that falls upon shoulders least capable of bearing it. How many tons of coal do myself and gentlemen in our position consume in London? We have to stay in London for a limited time. We take a house for three or four months during the Session of Parliament, when it is practically summer, and we consume little or no coal, and we save our taxes. It is the poor who always live in London who suffer most. I hope the House will distinctly say, that they, under no circumstances, will allow this duty of eightpence to be revived. I have great pleasure in supporting the Bill of my hon. Friend.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): I move the Amendment of which I have given notice as a compromise between the immediate abolition and the indefinite retention of the Coal Dues, and I propose that these dues should be continued for a limited period. The effect of carrying my Amendment would undoubtedly be to defeat the Bill, and it would also bind the House, so far as the House can be bound by its own Resolution, to pass another measure this

Session continuing the existing dues for a limited period, and I presume, after such a declaration by the House, Her Majesty's Government would afford facilities for the passage of such a Bill. But my Amendment is so framed that even the supporters of this Bill can accept its substance. If the hon. Baronet (Sir J. Pease) or any of his friends will give us an undertaking that they will alter the date of the preamble and first clause to 1890 or 1891, and if they will agree to accept a clause for continuing the Coal Duty at thirteen pence a ton for a limited period of one or two years, then I will not press my Amendment, but otherwise I shall take the sense of the House upon it. The hon. Baronet and his friends are mistaken if they think this is merely a duty of 8d. on sea-borne coal. That is not our reading of the Charter or the Acts of 1831 and 1845. The Corporation is entitled to levy this eightpenny duty on all coals brought into the port of London by the Grand Junction Canal, and down the river, or by the Great Western or South Western or Great Eastern Railways, and this is a point the Corporation will fight if necessary in a Court of Law. But I speak rather on behalf of the Metropolis than of the Corporation, and my Amendment is necessary to afford opportunity for deliberation. It is necessary and just that this opportunity should be given, for though the abolitionists have had the opportunity of laying their views before the public, we who are in favour of continuing the duty have not had such an opportunity. Though we are within a few weeks of the cessation of an income of nearly half a million, the 61 Metropolitan representatives, have never had a fair opportunity to argue out the facts and figures. Again and again we have asked for an opportunity to introduce a Bill to continue these duties, but, with scant consideration for 61 of their own supporters, the Government have refused such facilities. Last year we were told to wait for the election of the County Council, and now that we have a County Council it has pronounced against a Continuance Bill. Yes, but they passed this hasty Resolution within a few weeks of their election in the morning flush of passion and without examining the financial position of the Metropolis, and, I believe that resolution is condemned by the wiser and more moderate spirits on the Council. But the County Council is not the only representative body in London. We largely represent the ratepayers, and it is the cause of the ratepayers I plead. Certainly, if we wished to pursue a Machiavellian policy towards the County Council; if we wanted to enjoy the malign and infernal satisfaction of seeing the rates go up and the County Council go down, we have nothing to do but to sit still and watch the final deliverance of our political opponents, and the vengeance of our constituents. But we have another duty towards the ratepayers of London. The Coal Duty produced last year £450,000, and that is equivalent to a rate of between 3¾d. and 4d. in the £. This source of income being cut off must be made up, because it is not merely a question of stopping all public improvements in London, it is a question also of meeting debt charges amounting to over a million a year. To do the County Council justice, they do not pretend to do without it. They have boldly added to the rates; demand notes have descended upon us as described by the hon. Baronet (Sir R. Fowler).

*Mr. LAWSON: It is a 10 months' rate as against a six months' rate.

Mr. BAUMANN: The rate in the £, high as it is, is advancing by leaps and bounds. In the parish of Camberwell, which I represent, rates have gone up 5d. in the pound. That is a fact that neither he nor the hon. Member for Dundee can explain away. The Metropolitan Board of Works may have been corrupt, but it was cheap, and the County Council may be virtuous, but it is expensive. We have to pay a very pretty price for our municipal work. There are two statements with regard to London Coal Dues with which I should like, with the permission of the House, to deal. I have heard it stated, not only by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Chester-le-Street, but also on the authority of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, that, after all, London is not so highly rated as many provincial towns, and that, therefore, we might bear an addition to our rates to get rid of a tax on Coal. I have heard it said that the poor do not pay rates at all, that they are compounded for, but that they do

buy gas and coal, and that therefore they will not feel an increase of the rates, but will benefit by the cheapening of gas and coal. With these two statements I should like to deal. It may be true that London is not so highly rated as many provincial towns, though I think that a rate of 6s. 4d., which is the rate of Camberwell, is pretty high. Still, it may be true that other towns are more highly rated. But London is the most highly rented town in the country, and when you are asking the ratepayer to suffer an addition to his rates, you must never leave out of your calculation the amount of his rent. We know that in London the artizan and clerk pays as much as one-fifth of his income in rent. A clerk who earns £150 a year pays £30 a year for his house, and an artizan who earns from 20s. to 30s. a week pays from 4s. to 6s. a week in rent. Now, I should like to ask the House to consider the case of the man who pays £30 a year rent for his house. I want to point out what such a ratepayer will lose by the abolition of these duties. A man occupying a house rated at £30 a year and consuming five tons of coal, will save 1s. 1d. per ton or 5s. 5d. on his coal, and supposing he saves a penny per thousand feet on his gas and consumes 18,000 feet, he will save 1s. 6d. on his gas bill, or a total of 6s. 11d. But 4d. in the £ added on to his rates at £30 means 10s. a year, leaving a net loss to him of 3s. 1d. in the year. But I wish to descend to the case of the very poor, on whose behalf we heard some very eloquent pleading from the other side of the House. It is for the benefit of the very poor, we are told, that these duties are to be abolished, and the very poor are to get their gas and their coals cheaper. Unfortunately, those impetuous philanthropists who plead for the very poor do not always take the precaution to acquaint themselves with the details of the lives of these people. Now, Sir, as everybody knows in the Metropolis the very poor do not burn gas at all, but use mineral oil, and, as to coal, they have no place in which to keep any large quantity, even if they had the money to buy it, which they have not, and they consequently buy it in very small quantities. The artizan buys coal by the cwt. or half cwt., and the very poor by the pennyworth; and the benefit of the abolition of the duty in their case will hardly be felt. But the poor will feel the addition to the rents of their rooms which will inevitably follow upon a rise in the rates. Again, if the whole duty of 1s. 1d. per ton is to go into the pocket of the consumer, it is a little remarkable that the coalowners and the coal merchants are so very keen about its abolition. *Ex pede Herculem.* We know the size of the coal merchant's foot well enough when we see it. It is an ascertained fact in economical history that when once the market price of a commodity has been established, although the imposition of a new duty invariably increases the price, the abolition of an existing duty does not diminish it; and I confidently predict that the coalowner and the coal merchant will divide this 1d. 1d. per ton between them and leave the ordinary consumer to whistle for his return. I, however, only propose that these duties shall be continued for a limited period until the County Council has found something to put in their place other than rates. The history of the application of these duties is the history of the making of modern London under the guidance and direction of this House. By means of the imperceptible burden which they entail, the bridges have been freed from tolls, the River Thames has been purified and embanked, rookeries have been cleared away, and new noble thoroughfares made, and open spaces secured for the recreation of the people. I only ask for time—that the dues may be continued for one or two years until the County Council completes the valuation of London in which it is engaged. The County Council is in a difficult position, and it is a course wholly without precedent to ask for the summary abolition of the Corporation's chartered right to receive this money. I see no reason why the interests of the Metropolis should be sacrificed to those of the coalowners of Durham or to the scruples of a few financial prudes. I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the question, in order to add the words "having regard to the increased rate which the London County Council has found it necessary to levy upon the Metropolis, it is expedient to continue the Coal Dues for a limited period,

until the Council has had an opportunity of thoroughly investigating the liabilities it has taken over from the Metropolitan Board of Works and the resources of the Metropolis."—(*Mr. Baumann*).

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question."

*Mr. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, East): It affords me much pleasure to second the Amendment which has been so ably proposed by my hon. Friend the Member for Peckham. I do so because I believe that if the Amendment is carried and time is afforded the County Council to look around and see in what way it can raise this sum, it will be to the advantage of the ratepayers whom I, in common with every other Metropolitan Member, represent more or less in this House. It is not my purpose to follow the hon. Baronet, who, in introducing his Bill, gave us a very lengthy, and, at the same time I must acknowledge, a very interesting and admirable history of the manner in which these dues first came to be levied, and the purpose for which they were spent. It will suffice me to say that as he brought the history of these dues up to the present day and referred to the fact that of the total amount—1s. 1d.—there is allocated, 9d. to the County Council, and 4d. to the City of London, I am fully entitled to refer to matters relating not only to the City of London, but also to the County Council of London. The hon. Baronet made a strong point that coal is now a primary necessity to all the working classes of London. I would ask the hon. Gentleman, are not dwellings—is not the occupation of houses—in a climate such as that of England, an equal necessity to that of the use of coal? In the summer months, except probably to cook his food, the working man in London has no necessity for fire at all, and I am credibly informed that in many instances seven or eight working men join together and only have one fire to cook their food. It is said that the shipbuilding trade has left London. No doubt that is so, but what is the reason that the trade has left London? It has not been on account of the Coal Dues, which only amount to 1s. or 1s. 1d. per ton, but the shipbuilding trade has gone to some extent on account of strikes, but mainly from the fact that London is not near the coal pits or the iron-making districts. London can never compete with Newcastle in the shipbuilding industry from the fact that we have to pay 10s. per ton for the carriage of our coal, where they pay only 1s. or 2s. for bringing the coal to the smelting furnaces from the pit's mouth. The hon. Member appealed to the fact that the Chamber of Commerce of London decided against the Coal Dues; but hon. Gentlemen opposite whenever they have an opportunity of using it in their favour, always make the most of any resolution passed by a Chamber of Commerce, and do not like the resolutions of those bodies when they do not accord with their own views. The hon. Gentleman must be aware that large numbers of Chambers of Commerce in this country have decided that Fair Trade is a good thing, and if the hon. Gentleman accepts the one, he must accept the other. Then the hon. Member referred to the fact that the blacksmith in the country round London has to pay a large sum for his coals. No doubt that is so, and on account of the Coal and Wine Dues; but I would remind the hon. Member that there are many industries and callings besides blacksmiths in the contiguity of London. The hon. Gentleman the Member for West St. Pancras, I take it, from the way in which he received the remarks of the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London, rather denied that there has been an increase in the rates in London. Well, I will only give him one instance. In the parish of which he represents part and I represent part the present half-yearly assessment is 2s. 8d., and this time last year it was 2s. 3d.—an absolute increase of 5d. on the rates of that particular parish. Having said so much on that point, I will try for a moment to clear from extraneous matter all the arguments that have been adduced. The question is this: are we to raise a sum of about half a million of money to pay for the past, present, or future improvements in London, by means of these Coal and Wines Dues, or are we to raise it by some other means? The people of London have in the last two or three decades declared that we must have a good sewage system, embankments to our noble river (the Thames), increased open spaces, the bridges free, new thoroughfares, such as Queen

Victoria Street, the Holborn Viaduct, the Northumberland Avenue, the Clerkenwell Road, Shaftesbury Avenue, Charing Cross Road, and many others I could mention, many new bridges, the old bridges restored, and an efficient fire brigade. Parliament has sanctioned all these improvements, and in some instances, such as the Thames Embankment and the main drainage system, has practically initiated them. As it was manifestly unfair that one generation of ratepayers in London should pay for these improvements, it was decided by Parliament that the money should be borrowed for a term of 60 years, repayable, with interest, one-sixtieth yearly; and that has been the case since 1856. Well, whilst the cost of these great and important improvements has been £27,000,000 since 1856, the net debt taken over by the County Council amounts only to about £17,000,000, that is to say, that the value of the work done is £10,000,000 more than the amount of debt that has to be paid. But, then, in the Memorandum signed by the hon. Member for Sunderland and others, they say that the matter is completely closed and that all this work is done. No doubt the majority of these works are done, but they have not been paid for, and, as showing how the old body charged with the Government of London was thought of as administrators of the finances of the Metropolis, I would point out that whilst in 1869 the 3½ per cent loan could only get £94 14s. in the open market, in 1886 a 3 per cent loan was raised at £99 12s. 2d., and I have no doubt that, owing to the fact that money has risen in value, you could raise a loan at 3 per cent for the Metropolitan improvements at about £105. I cannot but think of what has been said by Mr. Fardell, who represents Paddington on the London County Council. This Gentleman, who is a strong advocate of the renewal of the Coal and Wine Duties, states:

"In my opinion a mistake was made in 1865, when the proceeds of the dues were carried to revenue, and I think that the Board would have done better if it had dealt with them all along in the same manner. It no doubt practically comes to the same thing in the end, so far as the ratepayers are concerned, but it would have disabused the public mind if the belief that the dues had been used to pay interest on loans raised without thought, the principal of which will fall upon the shoulders of the ratepayers if the Coal and Wine Dues are abolished. The ratepayers have had value for their money, and it must be borne in mind that large as our debt may seem, it has been incurred with the sanction of Parliament,"

and ratified by all the vestries of the Metropolis. I would point out that large as the debt of London is at the present time, it does not compare unfavourably, *pro ratâ*, with the debts incurred by other large centres in the country. Taking the Census of 1881, in the year 1885—excluding debts owed in respect of the acquisition of gas or water undertakings as in London we have not yet taken over the one or the other—I find in London the net debt was £7 17s. 3d. per head, whilst in Liverpool it was £6 8s. 7d., in Birmingham £9 3s. 9d., in Manchester £8 15s. 6d., and in Leeds £6 7s. 7d. And now I will only refer to one or two reasons why I think these Coal and Wine Dues should be renewed. These dues have been very little felt; they are equitable in their incidence. The rich man who has probably 20 or 30 fires burning in his mansion in London pays, *pro ratâ*, his proportion, and the poor man who has only a solitary fire pays his proportion. We are told that the poor man would have a saving in gas if these dues were abolished, but it has been already pointed out that the poor man in London, as a matter of fact, does not use gas for lighting his house, but uses paraffin oil. He buys his coal in such very infinitesimal quantities, probably not a cwt. at a time, that he would not, in my opinion, receive any advantage from this remission of taxation. I would also point out that by means of these Coal and Wine Dues great advantage has been done to the working man in the Metropolis by the acquisition of open spaces. Only last year Resolutions were carried in favour of the extension of Hampstead Heath and the purchase of Parliament Fields. The freeing of the bridges has been of great advantage to the working man. He can take his labour to and fro from one side of the river to the other without paying a toll. And the freeing of the bridges has also been of great advantage to manufacturers and merchants in London. I sincerely trust the County Council will go on with the

Blackwall Tunnel, the effect of which, if ever constructed, will be to bring together populations larger than those of Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester combined. It will save many a poor man from the necessity of paying a toll to get ferried to and from his work. It was found amongst 7,000 or 8,000 working men engaged on the construction of the Victoria Embankment that, on an average, they only used two tons of coal a year. And if the Bill were obtained, the whole of the money would go into the pockets of the coal owners, and not into the pockets of the working men. I think it is desirable that the future improvements and embellishments of the Metropolis should be carried out as hitherto, and I venture to say that if these coal dues are not renewed, the County Council, which is opposed to them, will not be in such a position to carry out improvements as it might have otherwise been. My hon. Friends propose to substitute for the exact dues, neither more nor less than a tax in some shape or other on buildings. The hon. Member for West St. Pancras will probably refer to a tax on ground rents; but does he imagine that by any scheme he can devise, or this House can pass, the tax will not sooner or later come upon the occupier? It may be that sooner or later we will have a House Court for London, in the same way as they have Land Courts in Ireland, to fix fair rents for houses. But such a scheme would be entirely unworkable, for to interfere with the law of supply and demand would unquestionably be productive of a deal of harm, that would unsettle men's minds. The Coal and Wine Dues have been of very great benefit to London, and if they are done away with, those who will derive the benefit will be the rich coal owners, wealthy proprietors, and rich gas companies, who will make £70,000 or £80,000 a year. I received a letter from a clergyman of St. Pancras this morning, pointing out how high the rents are in London, and I maintain that if a tax is substituted for the Coal Dues it will fall sooner or later upon the occupier of the house, and even down to the lodger. The clergyman writes:—

"The average rent of a single room is 3s.6d.; of two rooms 5s. 6d.; and of three rooms 8s. You may take this as rather understated, as I have a natural horror of overstatement. A man thinks himself decidedly lucky if he gets anything decent at that price—of course, unfurnished; and, perhaps, I may add that in giving you this average I have only brought it down as low by including all underground—that is, basement apartments back and front, tolerably good rooms, let much dearer. Thus my mission woman pays 4s. 6d. a week for a single back room. My Scripture reader pays 6s. a week for a single front room, rather larger than usual."

If the working classes in London at the present time have to pay such enormous rents, it is manifestly unfair that these Coal Dues should be abolished, for the result will undoubtedly be that they will have to pay an increased rent, because the tax on ground rents would sooner or later fall upon the occupiers, and even upon the lodgers. Sir, I contend this, and though probably my hon. Friend the Member for West St. Pancras will traverse the statement—that if 2,000 individuals were taken from any part of the register for the division which he represents, and 2,000 were taken from any part of the register for the division which I represent, and those individuals were asked whether they would like the Coal Dues renewed, or whether they would prefer 3d. or 4d. extra on the rates, it would be found that three out of four would express themselves in favour of continuing the Coal Dues. The Local Authority in the borough of St. Pancras considered the question of the renewal of the Dues, and 38 voted for the renewal and eight against. I venture to say that would have been the feeling of the constituents had they been polled right throughout. I would like also to point out that these dues bring in the sum of £450,000 a year, and that their abolition would lead to very little reduction of the price of coal. In 1883 a letter was written by the then Comsioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, in which the following occurred:—

"My Lords cannot overlook the growing impatience of the public under an increase of rates."

And the Members who now sit on the County Council will be unable in 2½ years' time to overlook the growing impatience of the inhabitants of London if the increase of rates goes on. My hon. Friend jocosely said, "Are we to have purity and high rates?" and by inference referred in the opposite sense to a non-existent body, and said we had

lower rates when they existed. It appears to me that if hon. Gentlemen will take the trouble to read the Report of the Commissioners in that matter, they will find that, with the exception of two men, one of whom was, by the way, on three occasions a candidate for this House in the Gladstonian interest, the whole of that Board went through the whole of that inquiry in the way honourable men should go through any inquiry. I know that hon. Gentlemen opposite are wholly in favour of direct taxation, which means taxation in some shape or other on land. But there are many districts in this country which would not pay rent at all if there were a heavy tax upon the land. I has been said that it would be best to have two forms of taxation—direct and indirect. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in bringing in his Budget this year, referred to the fact that it was desirable to have more means of taxation, and not to have all our eggs in one basket. If that be so, why should he abolish these Coal Dues; why should adopt one form of taxation when we have two? Hon. Gentlemen are aware of the fact that there are 61 Members for the Metropolis, at least two-thirds of them have stated views in favour of the renewal of the Coal and Wine Dues, and out of the 61, I believe, I am right in saying that from 40 to 45 are opposed to the increase in rates which will undoubtedly be caused if these Coal Dues are abolished, and fail also to understand why if 200 other towns and ports in the United Kingdom are allowed to pay for their local improvements from funds derived from this means of taxation, London should be differently placed. Why this House only (as I pointed out at the time) passed a Margate Coal Dues Bill this Session, by which that town can levy Coal Dues till 1920, whilst London is not to be allowed to have this means of raising money during the next two years, till the County Council has had time to get thoroughly into harness, and to clearly understand the duties and obligations that body will have to carry out and incur. Much as I respect the County Council which has to do good work in the future, I think their decision on this subject was arrived at hastily. They have pledged themselves to do away with the dues, but they have not told the people that they will have the alternative of paying 3d. or 4d. or 5d. extra rates. I believe that a large number of the members of the County Council had not an adequate knowledge of the scope of their duties, nor of the important works they had to carry out, and that if they had an opportunity of reconsidering their vote, many of them would vote differently to what they did on that occasion. In the interests of the ratepayers of London generally, and in those of the Borough of St. Pancras in particular, I venture to trust the House will assent to the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Peckham, and I beg to second it.

*MR. H. L. W. LAWSON (St. Pancras): I would like to be allowed to say a few words on behalf of the London Liberal Members. The hon. Member for Peckham was good enough to take the County Council under his wing. He said he wished to stand between them and the wrath of the electors because they had passed by a majority of two to one a hasty resolution against a renewal of the Coal and Wine Dues. He said that the subject had not been sufficiently discussed in the Metropolis. I wonder whether he knows that at the County Council election in January last that was one of the main questions before the electors. It was thrashed out on every platform, and I, who went to many platforms in London on the occasion when I fought a contest myself, can vouch that this matter was discussed. The County Council had as guide and adviser no less distinguished man than the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Lord Lingen, as to whose character I can appeal to every Minister who has served at the Treasury for the last 35 years. They do not show the least disposition to rescind the Resolution, and if they had to vote upon the Bill now before the House they would be unanimously in its favour. But this is not a Bill for London. It only affects the City of London. It is to do away with the preposterous claim of this insignificant square mile—one square mile out of 118— to levy a tax of eightpence upon every ton of coals brought into the port of London. Well, the opposition to this Bill comes from the City and from its satellites. I am sorry to say that the Remembrancer to the

City has taken upon himself to issue a memorandum which is transparently dishonest, in order to persuade hon. Members to vote against this Bill saying that a rate of 3¾d. in the pound will be imposed upon the ratable value of the whole Metropolis to make up for the loss of the Coal dues; but the Circular does not explain that out of those dues 4d. falls to the City and only 9d. to the rest of the Metropolis. So that the equivalent rate for the Metropolis is only just over 2½d., and the bulk of the money will have to come from the City itself. I do think this is a very undignified whine of poverty that the hon. Baronet has allowed to come from the Corporation, considering that the Bill does not concern in the least the poor ratepayers of London, but exclusively those in the City, who can well afford to bear their just share of public burdens. I object to the course the hon. Baronet has taken as trying to deceive the inhabitants of London. The hon. Baronet (Sir R. Fowler) has grounded his argument on the supposition that the abolition of the coal dues will seriously increase the rates of the Metropolis, and I will endeavour to show that his argument is fallacious. In a demand note issued by the parish of Kensington for the information of the ratepayers, it is stated that—

"The total rates for the new half-year amount to 2s. 8½d. in the pound, an abnormally large call, arising not from increased expenditure, but from the following causes:—(a) The call includes the final requisition issued in January (equal to a rate of 2¾d. in the pound), for the quarter ending 31st March, 1889, by the late Metropolitan Board of Works. The Board's previous requisition only covered the year ending 31st December, 1888; (b) It further includes the first half-yearly demand (equal to 8d. in the pound) from the London County Council, who have called up seven-twelfths (instead of the usual half) of their total estimates for the year running from 1st April, 1889, to 31st March, 1890; (c) All income has ceased from the Coal and Wine Dues, and thus an additional burden of more than 2½d. in the pound per annum has been thrown on the ratepayers. But for the above causes, the first two of which will, of course, not operate next half year, the total rates would not have been more than usual."

It will thus be seen that the hon. Baronet is misleading the House when he produces demand notes from a number of parishes and says: "Here is an increase of 2d. in the £, there one of 1½d.; and there, again, one of 3d." In the first place the charge is uniform. Then these demand notes cover ten months. The County Council was obliged by statute to levy a rate for ten months—three for the Metropolitan Board of Works and seven for itself—instead of six, as has been the rule and practice hitherto. On the other hand, the grant from the Exchequer in respect of local taxation is £255,000; and the hon. Baronet omits the fact that the County Council will have this contribution from the License and Death Duties. Does he know that the consolidated rate of the Metropolitan Board and the county rate are spread over the whole Metropolis? For my part, I think the County Council fortunate in having this increased revenue with which to face the situation. We must remember that to make up for the revenue derived from the lapsed Coal and Wine Duties we have to receive a large sum from the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

An hon. MEMBER: No.

*MR. LAWSON: Does anyone doubt this? Why there are £255,000 to come to us, and we lose £320,000, so that less than ½d. rate will meet the total loss accruing from the lapsed dues. It may be that owing to their having to meet a ten months' rate, instead of a six months' rate, the ratepayers may suffer some inconvenience; but that will pass away and they will really suffer no loss; at any rate, this is not an argument for the renewal of the Coal Duties. The latter history of these dues is that of a series renewals, and hon. Members opposing this Bill now propose that we should embark on another renewal, not for the Metropolis—for the proposal does not extend to that—but they do not tell us that the County Council has passed a Resolution against the continuance of the dues. After all we should not forget that they are charged with the ratepayers' interest, that we were elected on local and municipal and not on Imperial issues. The City opposes this Bill because it has made a terrible muddle of its finance, and the hon. Baronet opposite has tried to force the hand of Parliament by references to the works of improvement executed by the City authorities, urging that because of the Holborn Viaduct the Coal Dues ought to be renewed. The fact is that the City, having failed to get rid

of its obligations at the proper time, finds it will be practically bankrupt if the House refuses this demand. These dues have already been six times renewed in fifty years, and we are told they amount to at least 10 per cent on the amount of coal consumed, sometimes to as much as 40 per cent. I would point out that the well-to-do dweller at the West-End gets off more cheaply than the poor man, because the first pays the tax on a ton of coal at 24s., while the latter pays the same on coal purchased at 10s. or 11s. the ton. But the impost is not only unequal in its incidence on persons; it is also unequal in its incidence on industry. Mr. S. B. Boulton, in a speech to the Chamber of Commerce, said that in his own case he had to pay 4s. 4d. in the pound on the ratable value of his premises in respect to the coal tax, and he went on to say:—

"This instance applied to a business using 12,000 tons of coal per annum, partly for chemical works and partly for saw mills. He had to compete with foreign countries in the production of railway sleepers, and the coal tax in his case meant that for every 2s. spent upon labour, 1s. was spent upon coal. The competition was so keen that he had been obliged to place orders with saw mills in Riga, as although our coals were cheaper, their labour was cheaper. But the incidence of the tax was not in his case the worst, for another factory paid at the rate of 4s. 5d. in the pound on its rateable value, another 5s. 4½d., and another no less than 7s. 8d. in the pound, there still remained three sugar factories—and if there was one question which tested the strongest free traders more than another, it was that of the sugar industry—one of which paid coal dues to the extent of 13s. in the pound on its assessment, and another 17s. 6d. in the pound, whilst the third had gone down beneath the wave of adversity, had had to close its gates, and the labour it had engaged had had to seek other employment."

Just as this tax is unfair in its incidence on the manufacturing industry, so is it unequal in its incidence on the different localities. Up to now no proposal has been made to give any portion of the money derived from the tax to that part of the police area outside the Metropolis itself, but it is now suggested to allocate a certain amount of the duty to outside districts in proportion to rateable value. But how is this to be done? Under the Bill of the Junior Member for the City of London (Mr. Baring), in West Ham, out of £25,000 the sum of £8,340 will be paid back. This is a specimen of the gross injustice to be perpetrated under that Bill, the greatest injustice of all being that in the City they are to have the benefit of 4d.—a third of the whole tax—while the rest of London has only had 9d. The hon. Member for Peckham has said they will not be able to go on with the improvements absolutely needed in the Metropolis unless they look to other sources of revenue; but does not the hon. Gentleman see that the financial position of the Metropolis will be just as it was? As to new sources of revenue, I will not follow the hon. Member for Peckham nor the hon. Member for East St. Pancras (Mr. Webster) into their discussion of the question of rating ground rents and values. I was, however, amused to hear it put as a serious argument that the poor would not benefit by the cheapening of gas because they do not use it. Why, a large proportion of the poor are now housed in great industrial dwellings, in each of which gas is used, and has to be paid for like other charges. Beyond this it seems, if we are to judge from the action of the local bodies, that this movement for the better housing of the people will be extended, and that consequently the consumption of gas among the poorer classes will increase rather than diminish. The prophecy that there will be no reduction of price of light and fuel on account of the abolition of the duty is so puerile that it does not require serious treatment here. The hon. Member for Peckham questioned whether the reduction of duty would be of any benefit to the consumer, and asserted that no such reduction had lowered the price of commodities, instancing the case of bread and sugar. I hope that when the hon. Member for Poplar (Mr. Buxton) speaks, he will tell us what he thinks of this as an economical proposition. I will now only, in conclusion, impress on the House the fact that the County Council, who have to spend the money, have pronounced against the continuance of the Coal Dues. They discussed this matter with the electors before going to the Guildhall. It seems to me that the charge of confiscation of private rights is one that cannot be seriously argued, especially when we have before us the conclusions come to by the Royal

Commission in 1854 to the effect "that the Coal Dues which expire in 1862 should not be renewed" and "that the 4d. now levied on behalf of the City should cease at the same time," and when we remember the right hon. Member for Liskeard's letter on the subject, and that the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill) supports the abolition of the dues, as did Sir Stafford Northcote before him, I contend that this tax is indefensible from every point of view, that it is bad in principle and obsolete in its methods, and that in its effects it is harassing and injurious to the trade and industry of the Metropolis.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): It appears to me that we are gradually drifting into a debate not upon the subject of the Bill, but upon the general subject of the continuance of statutory Coal Dues. Upon that question the mind of the Government has been expressed more than once. Perhaps one of the strongest philippics ever delivered against the dues was from the noble Lord the Member for Paddington, and although the Government do not associate themselves with all the arguments which the noble Lord used, they do not wish to express dissent from the economic arguments he then laid down. These economic arguments are, of course, strong and easy to be urged. Expressing my own opinion, I might say it has always struck me that the argument that the Coal Dues operate prejudicially to the colliery interests, and to the manufacturers of gas and others, is of greater force than the *ad captandum* argument that they operate to the prejudice of the poor man. It is obvious that the Coal Dues are paid by the consumer, but the benefit to the smaller consumer by the abolition of the dues would be very infinitesimal, and I believe that the small consumer would feel the imposition of the additional rate, if that became necessary, more severely than the tax on coal. Industry deserves consideration, and the great collieries and manufacturers of gas, and all those manufactories in which coal is an item of consumption, are entitled to urge the arguments they have urged against the dues. But the Government more than once assumed the position that the maintenance or abolition of these dues is purely a local question. If the Metropolis prefers this indirect taxation, or would rather have the burden in the form of direct taxation, that is a matter for the Metropolis itself. Whatever may be the views of the Government as to which is the sound economic theory, they have no desire to depart from their position of neutrality. They are placed in a difficulty by the conflict of authority between two representative bodies — namely, the great majority of the Metropolitan Members and the London County Council—the first desiring, and the other opposing, the continuance of these dues. That makes it difficult to know what the real opinion of the Metropolis is. Possibly a little more discussion and a little more time might enable these conflicting views to be brought more closely together. The absolute theorists below the Gangway will hear of no compromize. The whole of the discussion appears to have been applied rather to the continuance or non-continuance of these statutory dues, which I agree Parliament could abolish it if it thought fit, but which, it must not be forgotten, have nothing to do with the present Bill. The Bill is on a different subject altogether, and cannot affect, one way or the other, the statutory 13d. which has been in operation since 1831. That will die a natural death—not even a violent death like the Metropolitan Board of Works—and no Bill is necessary for its extinction. What the present Bill purports to do is to take away, without injury and without compensation, those suspended rights of the City of London which have always been hitherto kept alive by Act of Parliament. The rights of the City to those old dues rest upon documents which are perfectly clear, and about the meaning of which, as they stood originally at least, there can be no doubt whatever. Those rights rest, first, on immemorial prescription confirmed by charter, and next on the statute of William and Mary. I think the right of "meting" is not of much practical value now, but the City has also an undoubted right to 8d. per weigh, which has never been touched by Parliament, and which Parliament has carefully kept alive.

Mr. Lawson

*SIR J. PEASE: But Parliament has put the duty of weighing upon the seller of the coal.

*MR. MATTHEWS: The Act of 1851 did no more than suspend the old rights of the City, and substitute, at first for seven years only, the 13d. duty, which has been continued ever since. The operation of the clauses of that Act will cease immediately on the cessation of the passing of continuing Acts.

*SIR J. PEASE: May I point out that under the Coal Sellers Act, the sale has to be made by weight, and the seller must send a weighing machine with his cart?

*MR. MATTHEWS: The continuing Act has always found it necessary to postpone not merely the date at which the duty shall cease to be levied, but has always indicated that the clause of the original Act of 1831 shall be applicable to the duties so continued.

*SIR J. PEASE: No.

*MR. MATTHEWS: If the hon. Baronet pleases I will grant that what I have just been saying is a matter of doubt. The hon. Baronet has himself suggested some remarkable and singular doubts. He suggested doubts as to whether the old City prescriptive rights existed at all, but he did not give the House any reasons for those doubts. He said he was advised that the rights conferred by various private Acts on the City had ceased to be operative by reason of the General Statute. Either the hon. Baronet's doubts are well founded, or they are not. If they are well founded his whole Act is useless. If it is doubtful whether those rights do exist, the point the Government take up is that they decline to assent to a Bill which takes away ancient and immemorial prescriptive rights which are certainly exercised for the public benefit —I will not say without compensation, because it might be that the City would ask for compensation—but, at any rate, without ascertaining that wrong would not be done thereby to someone. There is another matter which the hon. Baronet did not touch upon in his exhaustive speech. The matter stands in this position—there is a statutory 4d. which was substituted for the old prescriptive 4d. which the City had a right to charge by Charter. That statutory 4d. has been expressly charged by the City with the Holborn Valley expenditure. It seems to me a matter well worthy of the gravest consideration whether as a matter of law—certainly as a matter of equity—that debt does not attach to the statutory 4d. The House ought certainly to inquire, before allowing that 4d. to lapse, whether they are not injuring, not the City, but the creditors of the City, and whether the creditors would not be entitled to fall back on the original right of meting and weighing which the City has by prescription, and for which the statutory 4d. has been temporarily substituted for a period not long enough to discharge the debt for which that statutory 4d. was mortgaged. I think, too, that it must occur to everybody that the position of the City requires some consideration. The City may not always have controlled its finances in the most prudent way, but it has never been sparing in the use of its own money for the benefit not only of the City itself, but of surrounding parts. As regards the Holborn scheme, I must decline to enter into the question whether or not they have done wrong in spending more than the original estimate. They incurred in respect of those works a liability which the statutory 4d. has not been sufficient to discharge, and I am told there is still something like £700,000 due to the creditors of the City in respect of that liability. The City have incurred that heavy charge certainly in the expectation that the expenditure would be met out of the statutory 4d. That having proved insufficient, the City has a claim on the House of Commons with respect to that right, which former Parliaments have scrupulously respected, and the House should not sweep it away without even an attempt to ascertain whether the whole prescriptive right still exists, out of which the City may free itself from the burden which it has incurred for the public benefit.

*MR. LAWSON: The City has corporate property.

*MR. MATTHEWS: That is extremely good. The hon. Gentleman has private property also, and if he were to incur a liability on the security of some old franchise, as, for instance, the right to collect tolls in a public market, which franchise had been confirmed by Act of Parliament, I think the hon. Member would feel it rather hard if, after he

had burdened himself with a debt for the public benefit, that debt should fall on his private purse. Of course the City has private property, although the hon. Gentleman himself told the House that the City without those dues was bankrupt.

*Mr. LAWSON: Unless they get the power of charging the rates in the ordinary way.

*Mr. MATTHEWS: According to the hon. Member, the City is bankrupt unless his views are accepted. I think Parliament would depart from old custom if it passed the sponge over rights which were not derived from Parliament. The claims of the City, which has incurred this debt in the course of carrying out a great public improvement, seem to me of a nature which it is impossible for Parliament to overlook. I hope nothing I have said will in any way seem to minimize what I feel as to the grave objections to reviving the old prescriptive rights of the City. I am as sensible as hon. Members that the method of collection of the old prescriptive rights would be extremely inconvenient. All that the City requires, as I understand, is a little indulgence. At any rate, the position the Government take up is that they cannot assent to a Bill which wipes out, without a word, and without compensation, ancient rights which have been respected by every Parliament up to the present time. What the Government would propose, if the forms of the House allow it, is to move that a Committee be appointed to inquire what are the powers with regard to those dues, whether any debts or liabilities have been incurred in reliance upon them, and how, with proper regard to existing rights, and the public interests, those dues ought to be dealt with. On the other hand, I hope the House will not think, from what I have said, that the Government are at all favourable to the continuance of the Coal Dues in their present shape, or still less in their old form. I am only urging that the House should not take a hasty step which entails harsh or unjust procedure.

*Sir J. PEASE: Am I to understand my right hon. Friend to mean that he is willing to read the Bill a second time, and make the statement he has just given to the House an instruction to the Committee?

*Mr. MATTHEWS: What I intended was that the Committee of which I spoke should sit first.

*Mr. BURT (Morpeth): I am sorry to gather from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that the Government have receded from the position taken up by several successive Governments of uncompromizing opposition to the Coal Dues. Now, my hon. Friend the Member for Barnard Castle so completely entered into a statement of the reasons in support of this Bill that I do not think it is necessary for those who agree with him to go over the ground he has covered so well. I have listened with great attention to the answers that have been given on the other side of the House to the arguments put forward by my hon. Friend, and I have only found one reason assigned for the continuance of this tax, and that is that it is a very old tax. That, I submit, is not a sufficient recommendation for the continuance of a tax. This tax is objectionable in every way because it is on a necessary of life. It is a tax that falls with peculiar hardship upon the inferior and cheaper classes of coal, and, therefore, it injuriously affects the interests of the poorer part of the community. It was attempted to be argued on the other side of the House that because a poor man bought his coals in small quantities, therefore, the abolition of the tax would not affect him. But, Sir, it is because of their poverty that the poor purchase their coal in very small quantities, and, undoubtedly, any tax of this kind must fall with greater intensity and greater severity upon the smaller purchasers than upon the larger ones. We have been taunted more than once by Members on the other side of the House with this being a coalowners' movement, and it has been urged that the ratepayers of London ought not to be sacrificed for the benefit of the Durham and Yorkshire coalowners. I am not a coalowner; it is often my duty to oppose them. I have no direct or indirect interest in this question beyond the fact that the removal of the tax will cheapen coal to a certain extent and by increasing the consumption the coalowners and workmen may benefit. But I should like to point out to the House that this tax operates very injuriously upon inferior

qualities of coal because it is a most complete prohibition so far as they are concerned. Any one familiar with the coal trade will be aware that not unfrequently enormous quantities of small coal and coal of inferior quality have to be left under ground and at the pit bank to the serious injury of the country as a whole. It becomes a drug in the market, is a complete nuisance, sometimes takes fire, and not infrequently is a source of annoyance to the whole neighbourhood. There cannot be any doubt that by removing this tax the poorer classes will be enabled to purchase some of these inferior qualities of coal. The right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken said that this is a question for theet Mropolis to decide. I agree with that. Though closely associated with the coal trade in the North of England, I would not for a moment contend that the mining interests should override the interests and wishes of the Metropolis. But while I notice that the right hon. Gentleman referred to the London County Council and the City Corporation, and spoke of them both as representative bodies, he did not say that they were equally representative in dealing with a question of this sort. The County Council was constructed mainly by the present Government, the Members in seeking the suffrages of the constituents, thoroughly ventilated this question; they have now decided by an overwhelming majority, in opposition to these dues, and surely, Sir, that should count for something. The right hon. Gentleman said that great obligations had been entered into in the expectation that these duties would be continued. Well, but Sir, people should not enter into obligations of a serious kind simply on expectation. What right had the Corporation of the City of London, or the Metropolitan Board of Works, to enter into obligations in expectation of the continuance of these dues, which it was known were to expire this year. They were imposed for a short period for specific objects; the period has expired, and the objects have been accomplished. The hon. Member for Peckham said he approved of indirect rather than direct taxation, and he gave a very curious reason for that preference, for he said he liked to keep disagreeable things out of the way as long as possible. Sir, that would be well enough if disagreeable things could be kept out of the way altogether by a process of that kind, but they are bound to come up again, and if comparatively irresponsible and unrepresentative bodies choose to enter into these obligations without sufficient consideration I do not think that it is a good argument to say that it was done in order to keep disagreeable things out of the way. Now, the noble Lord, the Member for Paddington, has been referred to as having administered a slap in the face to the Board of Works. I think the noble Lord put the case against these Coal Duties, perhaps as admirably, and perhaps more ably than has ever been done before or since. In the course of his speech to a deputation in November, 1886, he used words objecting to the insidious nature of the tax. His Lordship pointed out that it encouraged the maintenance of a false standard of financial economy, and he went on to say that it enabled expenditure to be incurred the amount of which the great body of ratepayers were not aware. I support this Bill because the tax is a tax on a necessary of life and a tax which falls with peculiar hardship upon the poor; because the Coal Dues have been condemned by successive Governments, by a Royal Commission, by all financial reformers, and by the vast majority of the representatives of London. On all these grounds I shall vote for the second reading of this Bill, and while I do not want to interfere with my hon. Friend's discretion, I hope he will not for a moment think of agreeing to the suggestion of the Government to refer the question to a Select Committee.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Lambeth, Newington):—I should like to say a few words on this subject, because I happen to be unfortunate enough to differ apparently from the bulk of my Conservative colleagues in the representation of the Metropolis. I cannot support the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Peckham. The arguments by which he supported his Amendment, the arguments also by which the hon. Member for East St. Pancras seconded the Amendment, would all go to show that the Coal Dues ought to be maintained, not for a year or two years, but permanently,

as the best possible tax that could be selected if you want money for the improvement of the Metropolis, or for any other works. But although this Amendment has been spoken of in the sense that it refers to the continuance of the Coal and Wine Dues, it seems to me—though I do not raise the point of order now—that it has no possible relevancy to the Bill before the House. This Bill does not propose to abolish the Coal and Wine Dues, because they will cease on the 5th of July next: it proposes that something else, not the Coal Dues referred to in the Amendment, but certain rights possessed under Charter by the Corporation shall not revive as they otherwise would revive after the 5th of July; and to say that it is expedient to continue something which is not touched upon at all by the Bill before us, seems hardly to be in order. But I do not propose as I have said to raise a point of order, because I desire to say one or two words as to why I should oppose in any case the continuance by this House of the Coal Dues, for that, after all, is the point to which every speech has been directed. The question of continuing the Coal and Wine Dues has been brought before the House on many occasions, but what has always been done? These dues have been renewed, but they have been renewed for shorter and shorter periods. It is clear that the intention of the House of Commons, and that the feeling of the country, is in favour of the abolition of these dues, but when the question of their prompt and immediate abolition has been raised, what has always been the answer of successive Governments? Why, that the matter was one which especially concerned the Metropolis, but that the Metropolis, not having a thoroughly representative body, could not express its opinion on the subject. All Governments, Liberal as well as Tory, said they would not deal with the question until London had a properly constituted representative authority. Well, last year we passed the Local Government Bill. We knew perfectly well what we were doing. We knew we were going to set up bodies which would very likely be Radical. We tried to believe and to persuade others that this result would not follow, but we knew perfectly well it would. Having established this very body for whom we have been looking for so many years, to whose opinion we have for years been deferring with regard to this very subject, are we to reverse almost the first action they take in the matter? We should stultify ourselves if we did anything of the kind. On this ground also I should oppose the Amendment of my hon. Friend. What does the Amendment do? It pledges the House of Commons to continue the Coal and Wine Dues for some period at all costs. If the dues are continued they must be continued by Act of Parliament, and for us to pledge ourselves in favour of the impost before any Bill is brought in to continue it seems a very singular course to pursue. My hon. Friend the Member for Peckham is in favour of indirect taxation. So am I with regard to the general purposes of Government, and for collecting money for carrying on the business of the country, but not where the money is to be gathered from persons who do not know what they are paying it for, and where the money is applied to purposes in which they may have no interest and over which they have no control. For all these reasons, but chiefly on the main and principal ground that we ought not, having just constituted the very body whose opinion we sought, to go counter to the opinion that body has expressed on this subject, I oppose the Amendment. At the same time there is this to be said with regard to the Bill before the House, and it has been well said by the Home Secretary already, that it proposes to abolish certain rights which are believed to exist. Whether it is right for the House of Commons to abolish monetary rights without giving compensation, without inquiry into the extent of the rights, and as what the legal right to them is, is a matter which may be a proper subject of debate. I think it is highly improper to abolish rights which are believed to exist without proper inquiry. Therefore, although I shall feel it my duty to vote against the Amendment of my hon. Friend, if put to the House, I shall also feel it my duty to vote against the Bill. [*Laughter.*] Surely I am acting consistently. Why should I not vote against the Bill? The measure does not propose to continue the Coal Dues so as to abolish them, and therefore if I vote against it I shall not be touching that contested point at all. I shall act, I think, simply as a just man

ought to act—that is to say, I shall vote against taking away rights alleged to exist without some inquiry.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I regret, Sir, that I have not been able to attend during the greater part of this debate, having been occupied in another part of the House, as I shall again be occupied in a short time; but I hope the House will permit me to make a few remarks on the situation in which we find ourselves, because I think it extremely desirable that we should understand what we are going to do. I must pay a tribute of respect to the hon. Member for West Newington (Mr. Cooke), whose speech has gone a good way to disentangle and make clear to the House the questions which are now before us. I think he has made a good point in expressing doubt about the appropriateness of agreeing to the Amendment. The Bill does not affect to deal with the Coal and Wine Dues which have been levied in the past with respect to which the Amendment of the hon. Member of Peckham deals.

MR. BAUMANN: The Coal Dues.

MR. COURTNEY: The 1s. 1d. Coal Dues. They ceased to be levied by effluxion of the Acts under which they have been levied. Then the question arises whether the duty of 4d., which has been levied under charities by the City of London, which was dealt with in the legislation that has been referred to, and which has been reserved in legislation over and over again since, would not survive. Then there is another doubt. Supposing it did survive, what would be the extent of its operation—whether it would extend to sea-borne coal only, or to all coal brought into the City of London? There is still another doubt as to whether any arrangement could be made with respect to coal sent out of the limited area at present subject to the Coal Dues. As to the question discussed by the hon. Member for Peckham (Mr. Baumann) with regard to the comparative merits of direct and indirect taxation, I am of opinion that it is most inexpedient to have this form of indirect taxation in the Metropolis. I think it is injurious and unjust in its operation, and that it affects trade injuriously. Therefore, I have no hesitation whatever in affirming the proposition that such an indirect tax ought to cease. But that is not the only question involved in the Bill. If it is only applicable to sea-borne coal, that will create another anomaly. Supposing this were a different place from the City of London. Supposing this octroi were levied in any other area than London, we should not be able to proceed with the Bill as we are now doing. The question would arise whether the Bill ought not to be referred to the examiners, and other steps would have to be taken which are not in this case necessary. It is, therefore, our duty to look carefully into the matter. So far, however, as the Second Reading is concerned, and the declaration that the duty ought to cease, I, being in favour of the cessation of the duty, will vote for the Bill. But, as in the case of any other Corporation a Bill like this would be regarded as affecting property which ought to be protected against any form of invasion, it behoves the House to look to the defence of the interests which may be involved in the measure. Having regard, however, to the area subject to the tax, I do not think the matter ought to be regarded as one of property. It is a very different case from the ownership of private property. The House is dealing with a public body which was endowed with this form of taxation for a public purpose, and it is within the power of Parliament to withdraw the taxation. But we must have regard to what has been done to that body. It is not a complete answer to say that warnings have been given to the Corporation. If it were shown that the City of London, beyond its own area, had undertaken works which left a permanent debt too heavy to be defrayed without the help of this duty, questions would arise with which an ordinary Committee of the House would not be competent to deal. I would suggest, therefore, that the Bill should be referred to a hybrid Committee before which counsel might appear. In that way a reconciliation of interests may be effected. The Corporation will be heard, the circumstances attending the existing debt and the methods by which revenue should be raised for the discharge of that debt will be carefully considered, and means may be found for satisfying the just claims of the City of London. In this way I think that perfect justice might be done to all parties without raising the questions which have been referred to by the

right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary.

*Mr. WHITMORE (Chelsea): I must vote against the Second Reading of this Bill because I am in favour of the continuance for a time of the Statutory and other Coal Dues to meet the requirements of the County Council. We who are in favour of the continuance of these dues are anxious that the House should give us an opportunity of discussing the whole question. That opportunity has as yet been refused to us, and, as far as I can see, this is the only chance we shall have of expressing our opinion in favour of the dues as a whole. I say this at the risk of being called a satellite of the City of London by the hon. Member opposite. But I must tell him I do not see why we London Members should not discuss this question without any partizan feeling. We all know that it is desirable that further communications should be provided below the bridges between the two sides of the Thames; and that additional open spaces should be secured for the public in the outskirts of London How is this to be done if a revenue of £450,000 be taken away? No doubt aid has been granted to local taxation by the Act of last year; but that is not a sufficient reason for deliberately refusing this £450,000, and it is certainly most impolitic that this large sum should be made good wholly out of increased rates. It is not the case that either at the General Elections of 1885 and 1886 or at the County Council Elections the question of these dues was a determining factor; though, no doubt, many of the so-called progressive candidates expressed themselves in favour of their abolition. But then they held out the hope that the loss of these dues would be made good by spoils wrung from the City and the City Companies, and by new taxation of ground values. This hope cannot be realized as yet, and so the loss can only be made good by an increase of the rates. I am most anxious that the newly-constituted County Council should be an efficient and a popular body. I am sensible of the public spirit and of the large ambitions of its members. But if, at the outset, it largely increases the rates, it will certainly become unpopular, and it will certainly diminish its power for good. An increase of rates, too, will mean for the working classes—for the proper housing of whom Parliament and the country have been making such great efforts—a proportionate increase of rent. And it is the excessive rents of the houses of the poor in London, which even now is the great obstacle to their proper housing. For these reasons I am in favour of the temporary continuance of this indirect form of taxation, and I, for one, decline to ask the people of London to put their hands any deeper into their pockets than they are obliged to do at present.

*Mr. FIRTH (Dundee): The hon. Member who has just sat down concerned himself with the Statutory Coal Dues alone. This Bill has nothing to do with the Statutory Coal Dues, but raises the question whether we should pay these duties under a prescriptive right of the City. I think the old proverb, "let sleeping dogs lie," might very well have been applied in this case, and that the Bill might very well not have been introduced. I do not think the Corporation would have revived a prescription granted by very doubtfully-worded Charters of James I., and if they had done, we should have looked on with calm philosophy, knowing what would be the inevitable end. But now we have this Bill to discuss, let us discuss it. The claim put forward on behalf of the City is somewhat misty, as is not unfrequently the case with City claims. The claim is that by virtue of a Charter or two Charters granted, 3rd and 12th of James I., and supposed to be confirmed by a Statute 1 and 2 of William and Mary, the City is entitled to levy a toll on coal coming into London. Now, down to 1831 no coal of any account came to London, except by sea; 49-50ths came by sea, and of course this was still more likely to be the case in the earlier times, and it was purely towards sea-borne coal that the Corporation exercised the right of metage, which was conferred by the Charter of James I. and the Statute of William III. I have been reading, not without a certain amount of interest, a document issued by advocates of these dues, in which they speak of the inviolability of public faith as the most sacred of all matters, and I think we are justified, when we are asked to continue a right which as it is claimed dates back to the seventeenth century, in inquiring in what form this right then existed and

how it was obtained. In 1692 a Return was made to this House of the condition of the coal metage of the City, and it turned out that the whole proceeds of the prescriptive right, which we are now told is going to be reversed, was £1,120, and of that only £320 was allocated to the revenue of the City. Now we are asked because of the existence of that prescriptive right towards sea-borne coal then actually measured to sanction a tax upon outside London amounting to £150,000 a year, and the Home Secretary, with all that grace of diction which belongs to him, tells us of the unstability of public faith, statutes and prescriptive rights, and so forth, so that we really might suppose this was a matter at which we were to assist as in a very good work. Interwoven with this discussion there have been references to the 4d. rate granted by the Act of 1868, but it was perfectly understood, and so stated to me by our old Friend Mr. Ayrton, that in the year 1889 or 1888, as then understood, this duty was to cease. The Holborn Valley Works were expected to require an expenditure of half what has been actually incurred, but the incurring of the extra cost was a voluntary act on the part of the City, and the liability properly falls upon the City estate. I may mention, in passing, that the City took land which was not required for the Viaduct, and which was occupied by dwellings of the poor. Then stress has been laid upon the Act of 1694 by which the 8d. rate was made statutory, and to this Act, as readers of Parliamentary history is aware, curious incidents attach. For three successive years the Corporation had endeavoured in vain to secure the passing of a Bill to impose the rate as a means of relief from the heavy liabilities in which they had become involved to the extent of £747,000, and the loss of their Orphan's Fund by bad management, or, as they alleged, through public calamities. The Orphan's Bill having failed to pass, the Corporation, in their own quaint language, resolved to take means to "enable men to do for interest what they would not do for justice." They took that course, and eventually in 1694 the Bill passed, and is the Act now referred to. In reference to the principle of the inviolability of public faith, a Committee of this House inquired into the circumstances under which this Bill passed, and the result was that on March 12th, 1695, the House passed a Resolution—

> "That Sir John Trevor, Speaker of this House, for receiving a gratuity of 1,000 guineas from the City of London after the passing of the Orphan's Bill, is guilty of a high crime and misdemeanour."

This was in reference to an Act we have had quoted in connection with the principal of preserving the inviolability of public faith. The Chairman of the Committee, to which the Orphan's Bill was referred, also came under the condemnation of the House of Commons. I do not think, then, that the origin of the claim, whether in the Charter of James I. or the Statute of William III. is one to look back upon with any special satisfaction. It is very doubtful, indeed, that the prescriptive right has the value which has been attributed to it, for it was attached to the Conservancy of the Thames which, as everybody knows, was taken from the City in 1857. I should have been glad if this old Charter had been left undisturbed, and left to repose, as many other Charters do, in the womb of the past—forgotten. There is another—and the only other—matter I will refer to, which is important in respect to the London Council. There is an impression which has found vent in several speeches, that the London Council have increased the rates. I apprehend it is a point upon which I ought to have some knowledge. We have lowered them because, though we have lost the proportion of the amount derived by the Board of Works from the Coal Dues, we have the advantage of the Exchequer contributions between £200,000 and £300,000 provided by the Local Government Act, and so we have lowered the rates by twopence. So it works out in the financial arrangements of the Council, and taking into account the new duties that devolve upon the Council and which were excluded from the consideration of the Metropolitan Board. For matters taken over from the Metropolitan Board the rate is 8·1 pence in the pound as compared with the Board rate of 10·1 pence.

*MR. C. DARLING (Deptford): I confess I should like, if possible, to vote

for this Bill, and it would be a personal gratification to me, that I do not despair of, to be accompanied into the Lobby by the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London. After the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees I see no reason why a Member of the Corporation should not support the Bill and vote against the Amendment; that is if that suggestion is accepted. The City wants a recognition of what is due to them in connection with their liabilities. and that recognition being secured, there is no reason why my hon Friend should not vote against the Amendment. For a long time it seems to me this discussion ranged over ground not legitimately open to us in connection with this Bill. We were asked to come down here by pathetic appeals from either side, and coming here I find that the Coal Dues, the Statutory Coal Dues, are dead, or will be dead, on July 5th next, and nothing we can do, if the Government resist fresh legislation, will in any way revive them. It is, therefore, immaterial whether hon. Members approve of the dues or do not approve of them, for, in either case, the Statutory Dues expire on July 5th; and the only question is, whether certain rights which the City claims are to be revived or whether they should not; whether they should revive or be killed out of hand; "killed," as the hon. Member for Dundee said, "in the womb of the past." Well, I do not feel any particular pleasure in assisting at an operation of that description, but I cannot help thinking that the City has, in the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney)—a proposal that will safe guard all their rights and give them all they are legitimately entitled to. If we have from a Minister an authoritative declaration that this Bill shall be laid before a hybrid Committee who will consider how the claims of the City with respect to the £750,000—which they have rendered themselves liable for, and have pledged the credit of these dues for, by the construction of Holborn Viaduct—shall be met, then, I think, the Bill might be read a second time and we might trust the Committee to give the City all they are legitimately entitled to—half the amount of the dues if it should appear a fair claim, and it appears they do not desire more. I think London Members have been under a great misapprehension. Down to the very last half-hour they thought they were divided into two camps, those who approve of the Coal Dues and those who do not. But whether they approve of the dues, or whether they do not, is in either case a fact they can keep to themselves. The only question is, how far the City is pledged to the payment of this amount of £750,000, and how, if this source of revenue ceases, these liabilities are to be discharged. There is a stronger reason that induces me to support the Bill. I want to bring the County Council of London face to face with its responsibilities. I do not agree with my hon. Friend (Mr. Baumann) that any public body should be allowed to draw money from somewhere, but as to the where and how, nobody should know precisely how they get it. We observe the way in which the County Council is going to spend their money, and I should like the people to see with precisely the same clearness how they get it. The County Council will be in a better position if this information is made public. I have listened to the hon. Members for St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson) and for Dundee (Mr. Firth), and really I do not feel certain whether the County Council are raising or lowering the rates. This is simply because all their revenue is not derived in a simple, straightforward way, but some of it in a mysterious fashion that has found favour for years in the City of London. I think if we accept the principle of the Bill, read it a second time, and then refer it to hybrid Committee, the City will have nothing to complain of, though I admit I could not assist in passing the Bill into law in its present shape.

SIR H. HAVELOCK-ALLEN (Durham, S.E.): I do not intend to prolong the debate, but I must express my extreme regret that no willingness has been expressed on the part of the Government to accept the suggestion of the Chairman of Committees. It seems to me that it would absolutely meet the wishes of either side. It is needless for me, after the exhaustive speech of the hon. Baronet (Sir J. Pease) to enter upon the merits of the

case. I appreciate the jealousy with which Metropolitan Members regard the possibility of an increase of rates in London, but it has been shown by the two Members who represent the County Council that no such increase is taking place. The suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney) meets all the requirements of the case, and I trust the First Lord will agree to give the Bill a Second Reading and subsequently refer it to a hybrid Committee, where I am sure no injury is likely to be done to the ratepayers of London. In my own constituency, largely engaged as the people are in the coal industry, the feeling is general, even among the supporters of Her Majesty's Government, against these charges being laid upon the produce of their collieries.

GENERAL FRASER (Lambeth, N.): In a few but earnest words I would plead the case of my constituents. The hon. Member for Deptford said that Metropolitan Members who are in favour of the Coal Dues should keep it to themselves, but I do not purpose to do that. Among the very poor in the alleys and back streets of my constituency, just across the river, opposite this House, coal is purchased in the smallest possible quantities for a few pence, and though the dues are abolished no benefit will accrue to those poor people who buy in infinitesimal quantities. On the other hand, they freely enjoy the advantages of the improvements the duties have obtained, particularly open spaces and the abolition of bridge tolls. I do not speak of what might be the case outside my own constituency, but so far as my constituents are concerned, I feel it my duty to vote against the Bill.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): As the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite has appealed to me I may be allowed a few words as to the attitude of the Government towards the suggestion that fell from my right hon. Friend the Chairman of Committees. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has indicated the course the Government think they ought to adopt, and their view that the inquiry should precede legislation of this character. The Bill proposes to destroy ancient rights and privileges that carry with them large revenues, but before we do that it seems to me most desirable that we should have full information as to those rights, and the charges that have been incurred relying upon them. We must have an inquiry before we deprive a Corporation or anybody else of the means of meeting public liabilities incurrred. That is the general attitude of the Government towards questions of this kind. It is known to the House that there are 60 or 70 Corporations within the United Kingdom which possess powers similar to these, and which by legislation similar to that now proposed, might be deprived of the means of meeting public liabilities incurred on behalf of communities for whom they act. The Government regard action of this kind as exceedingly dangerous. But the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney) has made a suggestion almost identical with the views of the Government. He proposes that, with the view of simply affirming its principle, the Bill should be read a second time, and that then the Bill should be referred to a hybrid Committee of a judicial character, with full powers to deal with all the circumstances and to insert such clauses as may be necessary to meet the exigencies of the case so far as the liabilities of the City are concerned and the interests of the Metropolis are concerned. That seems to me a compromise that might very properly be accepted. The Government have not at any time expressed an opinion in favour of a continuance of the Coal Dues. In the Metropolis we know strong feelings have been expressed in favour of a continuance, and I know that such exist in my own constituency, these dues being regarded as a most valuable means by which great public improvements may be effected, and there is an indisposition to meet such expenditure by direct taxation. We may have regard to the sentiments of our constituents, and are justified in expressing them in the House, but the ratepayers of London have had the opportunity of electing a Council, and that Council has expressed a different opinion. It would be most inconsistent on our part, having adopted the course we have taken, if we, after the elected representative Council has declared its opinion, were now, as it

were, to turn round upon ourselves and vote for the Amendment of my hon. Friend, however we may sympathise with his object. I have another difficulty in voting for the Amendment, that it is not directed to the particular measure before the House. I refer to dues which are not the dues dealt with in the Bill. The Bill deals with ancient rights and privileges which are alleged to exist, but which have been suspended during the operation of the coal dues that now exist under statutory provisions. Under the circumstances, I could not vote for the Amendment of my hon. Friend. I trust we shall have an assurance from the hon. Baronet that he will accede to the suggestion of the Chairman of Committees, and that the Bill will be referred to a strong hybrid Committee with instructions to provide ample security that the public interests shall be considered in every respect.

*Sir J. PEASE: I am quite ready to take the Second Reading on the conditions which have been suggested. After the Bill has been read a second time, I will move that it be referred to a Select Committee, which will afterwards be turned into a hybrid Committee.

Mr. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I am very glad of the testimony the right. hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury has borne to the force of the opinion of the London County Council. I rise out of curiosity to know what will be the action of the hon. Member for Peckham (Mr. Baumann) under the circumstances in which he is now placed. We have heard from London Members sitting opposite a defence of the Coal Dues from the point of view of a preference for such a form of tax to any direct levy, and I want to know whether now, after all their grand statements, they are going to withdraw the Amendment and allow the Second Reading of the Bill to be passed, simply because steps may be taken by the Government and by the proposer of the Bill to safeguard the rights of the City of London. Is the whole of the high theoretical basis on which they support the Amendment to vanish into thin air the moment they hear that the prescriptive rights of the City of London are to be attended to by a Select Committee?

Mr. SEAGER HUNT (Marylebone W.): I wish to know whether the proposed Committee will go into the whole question of the Coal Dues, or whether it will confine itself to the consideration of the 4d. due. If the latter, will the 9d. due cease in July? If so, I shall certainly ask my hon. Friend the Member for Peckham to persist in his Amendment.

Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster): I hope the Amendment will be pressed to a Division, as that is the only means of taking the sense of the House on the advisibility of not continuing the Coal Dues. We who are in favour of their continuance view with great alarm the disappearance of the income of £450,000 which has been devoted during many years to great and permanent improvements in the City of London, improvements which have considerably enhanced the comfort and the health of the poor. We consider that those improvements must be continued, and if the Coal Duties disappear the cost of them will be thrown on the rates. The increase of the rates in London is becoming a burning question, and we think that any proposal to add to that increase ought to be closely scrutinized. We do not believe that manufactures are materially injured by this duty. Manufactures are prevented from developing in London by another cause—namely, the distance of London from the pit's mouth. The price of material used in manufactures in London is three times what it is at the pit's mouth, and that is the real reason why London does not develop more as a manufacturing centre. We do not want to see it develop as a manufacturing centre, because if it does it will draw into itself a still greater number of poor people from all parts of the country, and the weak and incapable will be pushed out of employment by the strong and capable, and the non-productive part of the population will consequently be increased. We do not believe that the remission of 1s. a ton will make any difference in the price of coal to those who buy in quantities of from 7 to 14 lbs. I was surprised to hear a great fallacy with regard to cheap coal put before the House by the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), who at least must know the habits of the poor, though

he may not, perhaps, know them very well in London. I say that the cheap coal is not used by the poor, and I challenge anyone who knows the houses of the poor and the prices paid by them to contradict me. The poor use their coal in small quantities, and they must have it of the best description. It must give the largest amount of heat and flame for the smallest quantity consumed, and the cheap coal that has been spoken of would not burn in small quantities. I hope my hon. Friend will press his Amendment to a Division.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I should not have troubled the House on this question if it had not been for the observations of the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. J. Stuart), who seemed to be under the impression that the Conservative Members for the Metropolis were agreed in a desire for the continuance of the Coal Dues.

MR. STUART: That is what I gathered from the hon. Member for Peckham (Mr. Baumann).

MR. RITCHIE: My reason for troubling the House is that I desire to record my dissent from that proposition. I have for years past taken up an attitude of absolute opposition to the dues. I do not agree that it is undesirable that London should become a manufacturing centre, as I desire to see the opportunities of employment for the people increase. The tax falls very heavily on the inhabitants of the East-end of London. Some manufacturers in that district pay, not hundreds, but thousands a year in meeting the tax, and therefore it is in the best interests of those whom all wish to see employed that London should be freed from such a burden. The poorer classes would also benefit by the abolition of the tax, perhaps not in a reduced price of coals, but in an improved quality. One of the reasons why I object to the tax is that it is very unequal in its operation. In the City and the West-end the rateable value of the houses is so high compared with the quantity of coal burnt that the tax in those areas is practically non-existent, while the poorer classes throughout London pay to the full. My own impression is that it will be for the benefit of all classes of the community—manufacturers, employers, and the working classes, generally—that this tax should cease to exist.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): I wish to correct a wrong impression which it seemed to me was conveyed by the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. Burdett-Coutts). He seemed to wish the House to infer from the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) that this question was one which did not affect the working classes, and that the cheap coal to which my hon. Friend referred as being kept out of London by this tax was a coal which the working classes did not use and would not burn. That is not the case, the workmen in Durham and Northumberland and elsewhere, get no other class of coal to burn and we wish to bring this manufacturing coal to the working classes of the Metropolis by the removal of this tax.

MR. ATKINSON (Boston): I should not have risen had not a right hon. Gentleman sitting on the Ministerial Bench endeavoured to prove, and apparently did prove to his own satisfaction, that the best quality of coal would come into London if this Bill were passed. The hon. Member who has just sat down has proved on the other hand that the worst quality would come in, and I think therefore the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Gentleman may very well be left to answer one another. We are told we shall stultify ourselves if we do not vote for this Bill, because the County Council of London has asked us to pass it. How that can be, when the Council does not represent the majority of the people of London? If the County Council of London had been elected by the majority of the voters I could understand such an argument, but the only reason the County Council is Radical is that the members declared that politics would not come into the contest. An hon. Member on this side of the House said the Coal Dues would die a natural death if they were not interfered with. So will the present County Council die a natural death, and when it has died that natural death you will have a Conservative County Council. That being so, we shall in my opinion stultify ourselves if we vote now at the request of the Liberal County Council. I think the Council is rather rash in rushing

into the discussion of questions in regard to which its members have no experience whatever, and they ought in my opinion to get a little experience before dictating to the House of Commons as to how we should vote. [*Interruption.*] I shall cordially support the rejection of this Bill, and I am very sorry indeed that any change of front has taken place on this side. The Home Secretary said he would not accept the Bill. [*Cries of* "Divide," *and interruption.*] In my opinion the only argument for referring the Bill to a Select Committee is that when there is a Gladstonian or Parnellite or any other Government on the side of Gentlemen opposite in power, they want to be able to argue that even when a Conservative Ministry were in they allowed the Bill to be referred to a Select Committee. I protest against giving hon. Gentlemen opposite the opportunity of using that argument to show that we thought this a good Bill. I beg to call attention to the fact that coal owners both on the Conservative and Liberal side have pronounced for this Bill, and I can state from my experience of 30 years' dealing with coal owners that it is into their pockets that this money will go if the dues are abolished.

The House divided:—Ayes 264; Noes 104.—(Div. List, No. 124.)

Main Question again proposed.

It being after half-past Five of the clock, and objection being taken to further proceeding, Mr. Speaker rose to interrupt the Business,

Whereupon Sir Joseph Pease rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time," put accordingly, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee."—(*Sir Joseph Pease.*)

Objection being taken to further proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

MASTER AND SERVANT BILL. (No. 205.)

Considered in Committee; Committee report progress; to sit again upon Wednesday next.

PARTNERSHIP BILL. (No. 151.)

Read a second time, and committed to a Select Committee.

SUPPLY REPORT.

Resolution [21st May] reported.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £67,163, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the expenses connected with the acquisition of the Submarine Telegraph Company's Property required for the Post Office Telegraph Service."

Resolution agreed to.

COUNTY COURT APPEALS (IRELAND) BILL. (No. 128.)

Considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 241.]

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL. (No. 81.)

Order for Second Reading, read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

REGISTRATION OF COUNTY ELECTORS (EXTENSION OF TIME) BILL. (No. 210.)

Read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 225.)

As amended, considered; Amendment made; Bill read the third time, and passed.

BRIBERY (PUBLIC BODIES) PREVENTION BILL. (No. 158.)

Considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

It being Six of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 8.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MAY 31.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 23rd May, 1889.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 84.)

Read 1ª, and to be printed.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1883) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 87.)

Reported from the Standing Committee on General Bills, with Amendments: Report received; Bill re-committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next; and to be printed as amended.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT (1855) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 50.)

Reported from the Standing Committee on General Bills, without amendment: Report to be received to-morrow.

HARES PRESERVATION BILL. (No. 72.)

SECOND READING.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: My Lords, in asking your Lordships to give a Second Reading to this Bill, it is hardly necessary for me to dwell at any length upon the necessity for the Bill, since two years ago the matter was fully discussed, and this Bill was introduced into the other House of Parliament by Colonel Dawnay. Many persons then advocated a close time for hares. As many as 14 Peers wrote letters in that sense to *Land and Water*, and others may have written to the *Field*, and there were many petitions in favour of Colonel Dawnay's Bill. Those sent in through the Sports Defence Association contained 30,400 signatures, and a great number of other petitions were presented by the Members for the districts of the petitioners. One petition from Derby had 700 signatures of constituents of Sir W. Vernon Harcourt. The Bill, when introduced in the other House, bore the names of Colonel Dawnay, Sir John Lubbock, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Dillwyn, and Mr. Lawson. This Bill is the same as that which was introduced into the other House with one variation or alteration. The Bill of two years ago made the close time to extend from March 12th to August 2nd, whilst this Bill makes it extend from March 1st to September 1st. This is immaterial, as the duration of the close time is one for discussion in Committee. Speaking for myself, I could not be a party to legalizing the killing of hares in March when the breeding season is well advanced, and hares are proverbially mad and therefore unfit for food. My Lords, I think the additional days from the 12th of August till the end of the month would be a most reasonable extension, since the crops are often not off the ground by the end of August, and the farmers are then and later fully occupied with their harvest work. If on account of grouse shooting, commencing on the 12th of August, it were convenient in Scotland to commence shooting hares at the same time, Scotland could have a different time fixed for it. My Lords, I had the opportunity of going last Monday to the Central Market at Smithfield, and I only found three hares at a dealer's, who showed me that they were all full of young and not worth 2s. each. This dealer was indignant at such animals being killed and sent to market. I have heard but one objection made to

a close time for hares, and that is that in some parts of the country it is not required, and that the quantity of hares has not diminished. That, however, only proves that in those districts the hares have practically got a close time already, so that there the Bill would make no difference and would not be a restriction. My Lords, I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, with regard to the principle of the Bill, I see no objection to it, whatever may be said as to the particular dates which the noble Lord has adopted in it. I think, my Lords, if the Bill be read a second time, it might be well that it should be referred to a Standing Committee.

LORD BELPER: My Lords, without desiring to induce further discussion on the matter now, I should like to point out one objection which may be raised. This Bill proposes to make the close time extend from March 1st to September 1st; but in June and July, when the crops are growing, hares are very often found to go considerable distances to get at them. They are very fond of growing crops, and a good deal of damage may be done in a very short time. Where many hares are preserved, it is the custom to kill them during those months to prevent the crops from being materially interfered with and suffering serious injury. But if this Bill passes in its present form there will be no power for the landlord or the tenant to kill hares on farms when they are injuring the crops. I therefore hope that if the Bill is now read a second time, it will be amended in Committee, so as to meet the objection that I have indicated.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: I move that the Bill be referred to a Standing Committee.

THE MARQUESS of SALISBURY: With regard to exceptions from the general principle, it seems to me there is an obvious duty of the Standing Committee to watch the drafting of the Bill.

*THE EARL OF DERBY: There is no question, I think, as to the general principle on which the Bill is based. That seems to be accepted by both sides of the House. But it will be a fair question for the Standing Committee whether, in the application of that principle, some exception may not be admitted; for instance, whether the prohibition to kill hares at certain seasons may not be relaxed or suspended in cases where it can be proved that they are doing damage, and where all parties interested agree that their numbers should be diminished. An Amendment to that effect may very well be made in Committee.

EARL CADOGAN: My Lords, I venture to suggest that it is extremely undesirable it should be thought, upon a Motion being made that a Bill should be referred to a Standing Committee, that therefore all discussion on the Second Reading of the Bill should cease. It appears to me that the question of principle, which is in reality the main point of this Bill—that is to say, whether or not there shall be a close time for hares, can be properly discussed at the present stage. There seems to be a misapprehension on the part of noble Lords that the moment a Bill is referred to a Standing Committee all discussion is to cease on the part of the House. I hope that will no longer be the case.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to the Standing Committee on General Bills.

HORSEFLESH (SALE FOR FOOD) BILL
(No. 88.)

Amendments reported (according to order).

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I move as an Amendment on the Report, on page 1, line 8, after "place" insert "over or"; and in line 11 to leave out "over or upon such shop, stall or place," and insert "and so as to be visible throughout the whole time whether by night or day during which such horseflesh is offered or exposed for sale." Those words, my Lords, propose to carry out the suggestion made on the previous occasion upon the objection that the clause only provided for a conspicuous notice to be placed over the shop or place where horseflesh is sold, which would be visible in the daytime, but not after dark.

LORD NORTON: My Lords, I would point out that as the Bill now stands, if a person goes into a shop and asks for both mutton and horseflesh he could not legally be supplied.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: The words provide that if any persons asks for mutton he may get mutton, and if he asks for horseflesh he will get horseflesh.

Amendment agreed to. Bill to be printed as amended; and to be read 3ª on Tuesday next. (No. 88.)

LARCENY ACT (1861) AMENDMENT (USE OF FIREARMS) BILL. (No. 30.)

House in Committee, on re-commitment (according to order).

*LORD BRAMWELL: My Lords, I desire to call the attention of the noble Lord in charge of the Bill to a matter which I mentioned in Committee, but too late for practical consideration. The clause is applicable to persons found guilty of offences referred to in sections mentioned in the Schedule. One of these mentions the burglary committed by a person who, being in a house, commits a felony, and then breaks out. This offence would be committed by a man who went into a lodging house, paid for his bed, but, tempted by his neighbour's coat, stole it, and opened the door and walked away before six a.m.; and if there was a pistol in the pocket of the stolen coat he would be liable to be flogged. I was too late in Committee, and I now ask your Lordships to allow me to mention this (I say it most sincerely) for the sake of the Bill, because I think this will jeopardize it. With regard to persons breaking out of a house, thereby committing burglary, and being subject to punishment, I suppose there must have been some reason which made the law call this breaking out a burglary. I may tell your Lordships that the class of case which I have almost exclusively met with coming within that description is that of a tramp who has gone into a common lodging-house. Being tempted by his neighbour's coat or some other property which he can carry away, he has opened a door and walked out before six o'clock in the morning. Well, that would be a burglary; it is a breaking out after having committed a felony in the house; and as the matter now stands a man who is convicted of such a burglarious act, if there happened to be in his possession a pistol, it might be, in the pocket of the coat he had stolen, would be subject to a conviction for having committed a burglary, having firearms in his possession, and would be subject to be flogged. When I stated that objection in Committee it was overruled for the reason I have given; but I would ask now whether that is intended? It is said that it is not conceivable that any Judge would, under those circumstances, order a flogging. Any Judge in his senses, I should say, would decline to do so under such circumstances. Then why give him the power? That seems to me to be the sovereign answer to it. If the power is given to a man in possession of his faculties he will not exercise it. Then do not give him power to do it. It is possible a Judge might say, "I should not have had the power given me to do it unless it had been thought right that I should sometimes use it." I think, therefore, that your Lordships should exclude from the Bill that provision which I have mentioned. The objection is not confined to the 2nd Clause in the Schedule, because there are others which are open to the same kind of objection. My Lords, I really do not like to move an Amendment, because the noble Earl who has charge of the Bill is thoroughly conversant with these matters, but I think the possible operation of the provisions ought to receive his attention. It seems to me these things in the Bill imperil the other provisions in it which I think your Lordships assent to in principle.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: My Lords, in answer to the observations of Lord Bramwell, no doubt the Section 51 of the Larceny Act does refer to breaking out as being a felony as well as breaking in. If a person having entered a dwelling-house with intent to commit a felony, and having committed such offence, shall break out at night, he shall be found guilty of burglary. I cannot see why it should make very much difference in his guilt if he is there for the purpose of committing a burglary; and this Bill will only apply to persons found armed with a pistol or other firearms. In the case put by the noble and learned Lord, it would be for the Judge or jury to say whether the accused was in possession of a pistol when he committed the burglary, and the infliction of whipping would be a matter of dis-

cretion with the Judge or jury, and if the power were taken away some serious cases of burglary by persons carrying firearms would be exempt from the operation of the Act. I cannot imagine that in the case of the supposed unhappy burglar stealing a coat, in the pocket of which there happened to be a pistol, he would be charged with having a pistol in his possession while committing a burglary. I do not think the position is one which is likely to occur, and if it did it would be for the jury to say whether the man had a pistol in his possession at the time of committing the burglary.

*Lord BRAMWELL: I should like to make one remark. The noble Earl has misread Section 51. The second part of it would apply to a man who had entered a house with the most innocent intentions, but being tempted by something he sees, steals it. Merely opening the door after committing the felony is a sufficient breaking out, and, therefore, the clause would apply to the case I have mentioned.

*The Earl of KIMBERLEY: I should like to call the attention of the House to one point. I thought the object of the Bill was to diminish the chances of persons being terrified by burglars with firearms in their possession; but as the Bill stands it would apply, not only to dwelling-houses, but to persons breaking into churches and chapels or other places of Divine worship, which, however serious an offence, does not involve terror to occupiers. While I have a great horror of persons committing sacrilege, there would not be danger, probably, to anyone.

The Earl of MILLTOWN: My Lords, the noble Lord has given his own interpretation of the reading of my Bill. He says, very truly, as I stated on the Second Reading, that the object of the Bill was not only to reassure the occupants of dwelling-houses, but also to lessen the risks of the police, who are exposed to serious danger when called upon unarmed to arrest persons who carry firearms. Many cases have occurred in which the police, when gallantly performing their duty, have been shot down by armed burglars. I cannot doubt that there have been many cases where burglars have been enabled to escape owing to the possession of firearms which they were carrying while committing burglary. In the case referred to of burglars breaking into a church or chapel, though there could be no danger to occupants, there might be danger if anyone were going there early in the morning when any attempt to arrest the burglars might be stopped by the menace of a loaded revolver. That was the case which I had in my mind when I prepared the section.

*The Earl of KIMBERLEY: I should like to make this further remark upon what the noble Earl has said with regard to the danger of the police in arresting armed offenders. That danger is not confined to burglars, for I can mention a case of horse-stealing in which the police were fired at by the horse-stealers.

Lord FITZGERALD: My Lords, owing to technicalities of procedure with regard to the practice in the Standing Committees, I have to state that I will, on the Third Reading, move certain Amendments on Clause 1 which I was unable to move in the Standing Committee. It is one of the rules of the Standing Committee that once a measure is agreed to and passed by the Committee, you cannot fall back upon it for the purpose of amendment. It so happened that the 1st Clause was passed with very little objection, and it was not until a later period that several objections arose, which were met by the statement that you had already passed that clause, and cannot now fall back upon it. If the Committee had power to go through the Bill a second time, I venture to say that those objections would have to be disposed of. I wish to set this matter right, and I have kept back the objections which I have until the Third Reading.

Bill reported without Amendment, and to be read 3ª to-morrow.

TOWN POLICE CLAUSES ACT (1847) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 38.)

Bill reported without Amendment, and ordered to be read 3ª to-morrow.

ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICES.

Return showing the names of the Secretaries of the Archbishops and Bishops, of the Registrars and Deputy-Registrars, of each Diocese of England and Wales, with the date of the appoint-

ment, distinguishing those whose appointment has been confirmed by the Dean and Chapter; the duties performed by each; the fees or other emoluments received in each year from 1880 to 1888 inclusive; Ordered to be laid before the House.—(*The Earl Beauchamp.*)

PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES AND CUSTOM HOUSE OFFICIALS.

QUESTIONS—OBSERVATIONS.

*LORD RIBBLESDALE: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the Custom House regulations with respect to undeveloped photographic plates, and to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they consider the existing regulations reasonable. I have a tale of horror to relate to your Lordships. A friend of mine who landed at Plymouth recently from the steamer *Doric*, which came from the Canary Islands and other places, had, together with his fellow-passengers, to submit to the dreary farce of having his luggage examined. Among this luggage was a box containing undeveloped photographic plates, and this box the Custom House officials insisted on having opened for examination. Explanation and entreaty proved useless. The officials had apparently taken into their heads that the photographs might be of an indecent or improper character. The passenger asked for a dark room where he might without injury display his plates, but there was none such, and he had to wait in Plymouth until the next day, when the box was opened in the dark room of a local photographer, when nothing was discovered by the suspicious Custom House officers more suggestive than a picnic party lunching on the cratur of an extinct volcano. I have every sympathy with the Custom House officers in their desire to prevent the importation of indecent photographs, but if the precautions that they were determined to take in this instance are deemed necessary, a dark room ought to be provided where passengers with undeveloped plates amongst their luggage might have been examined without their being spoiled. My friend writes to me as a practical man, not at all in anger but in sorrow, complaining that in the Custom Houses there are no conveniences afforded in these cases for carrying out instructions which apparently emanate from some persons in London who are totally ignorant of the science of photography; accordingly, valuable photographs may be irretrievably spoiled, and if these regulations are to be carried out in the Custom Houses, an ordinary dark room should be fitted up for the purpose. I do not wish to say how far it is incumbent on the Government to adopt this suggestion or whether they should establish a dark room in every Custom House in the country; but until this is done it seems to me the regulations are not only exceedingly unreasonable, but exceedingly vexatious, and I should be very glad to hear from the Representatives of Her Majesty's Government that they share that opinion.

LORD DE ROS: I am very glad that the noble Lord has brought this subject forward, because it is one of great importance to people who are in danger of having their plates entirely destroyed. Professional photographers visit Switzerland and other countries and bring home plates which are developed in this country. They produce the beautiful photographs which are to be seen in shop windows and exhibitions; and it is very hard that they should have their labour, trouble, and expense wasted by the action of Custom House officials. There should be some means of developing the plates at the different places; or a person should have the opportunity of stating on oath that what he had were *bonâ fide* photographic plates.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, it falls to my lot to defend the Government on this occasion. I can only say that this particular Customs official appears to be a man of inconceivable stupidity, and I hope that the adventure related by the noble Lord will not happen in the future. This is the first I have heard of the matter. I did not know in the least from the notice on the Paper what was the cause of these sensitive plates being exposed to the light; I imagined that it might be dynamite. The protection of decency is a very worthy pursuit, but it should be pursued with some discretion. However, it is not necessary to make any very elaborate preparation in order to avoid these mishaps in the future. Regulations have been issued to all Custom Houses that if sensitive plates are to be examined they should be examined in a dark room by

a red lamp. I do not think it is possible that such a misadventure as that to which the noble Lord has referred can happen again. I am sorry that the knowledge of advancing science has spread so little among certain branches of Her Majesty's Service that it should be necessary to issue such regulations.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, That the Committee have added the Lord Belper to the Standing Committee for General Bills for the consideration of the Hares Preservation Bill.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock, till To-morrow a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 23rd May, 1889.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

MANCHESTER, SHEFFIELD, AND LINCOLNSHIRE RAILWAY (STEAMBOATS) BILL.

Order for consideration of Bill (by order), read as amended.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now considered."

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to move as an Amendment that the Bill be taken into consideration upon this day six months. I think I shall be able to show that there are such exceptional circumstances in the case as will justify the House in taking that view of the matter, especially as I understand that the Select Committee in the decision at which they arrived were not unanimous. It is necessary, in the first place, that I should refer the House to the Standing Order passed in relation to this matter in 1865. It says that no railway company shall have the powers sought by this Bill, except the Committee on the Bill shall report that no restriction ought to be applied to a particular company, with the reason and facts on which their opinion is founded. The position of the matter is this—that the Committee have to make a Report, not only that it is desirable the company should have powers to run steamboats to various places, which is the object of this Bill, but that in the public interests it is desirable that such power should be given to them. I take it that the object of the Standing Order is to enable the House, as the ultimate Court of Appeal upon the subject, to form a judgment as to the propriety of passing a Bill, and the Standing Order itself suggests that the promoters of the Bill should assume the onus of satisfying the House that the powers sought for ought to be granted. This Bill proposes to give the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company power to run steamboats to a large number of places in Europe from Grimsby, including even Norway, much exceeding the scope of any Bill ever previously granted. The Committee reported that the Bill ought to be passed, because it had been shown to the Committee that the railway company had already had powers conceded to them to run steamers to various specified ports, and therefore the Committee were of opinion that such powers might be extended. The Committee added to their Report, formally, that there were no other circumstances which need be brought to the notice of the House. Now, the Committee are under obligations to state the facts and reasons for the information of the House, and it is, therefore, to be assumed that in this case the Committee have dealt in their Report with the whole of the reasons. Consequently, I propose to limit my observations in criticizing the proposals of the Bill to the case of the one precedent which has been stated—namely, the precedent of the Bill of 1864, the reasons for which have been set out in full detail for the information of the House. I would refer the House also to the Report of the Committee which sat on the general question under the Chairmanship of Colonel Wilson Patten (Lord Winmarleigh), then a well-known and able Member of this House, which alleges that the reasons ought to be set out fully in all cases of this description. Now, I submit that the principle upon which the Report of the present Committee is based—namely, that a company which already has

certain powers ought to have more, is a principle which may be extended *ad infinitum*, and in each successive application to Parliament the argument in favour of further powers would become irresistible. But I maintain that that cannot have been the intention of Parliament under the Standing Order, because that Standing Order prescribes certain limitations which have in every case been inserted. I would, therefore, respectfully suggest that the argument on which the Committee based their Report, that because a company have been granted certain powers they ought also to have other powers is altogether a fallacious one, and entirely contrary to the principle on which the Standing Order was passed. Let me ask the House to examine the precedent on which the Committee found their decision. That precedent of 1864 was a most exceptional one, and was created under the most exceptional circumstances. The Act of 1864 was for power to run boats to 11 places Parliament granted the application, since which the company have actually run steamboats to three ports on the coast of Europe, and to no more. A General Committee upon steamboats also sat in that year, 1864, and made a Report, in which they suggested that there was no reason for the Standing Order, and that in future railway companies should have the general power which was asked for on their behalf. Before the Report of the Committee could be presented, the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company obtained their Bill, and between 1864 and 1865, when the Committee reported adversely, there was a change in the policy of Parliament, which rejected the Report of the Committee of 1864, showing that they were not in favour of granting general powers, but only limited powers. Consequently, the Standing Order was enacted in 1865, and Parliament has since required the promoters of Private Bills to put before the Committee the reasons and facts upon which an application is made, the Committee are expressly to state to the House the facts and reasons for the application being granted. Therefore, I maintain that the precedent of 1864 does not apply, inasmuch as it has been superseded by the general law of 1865. I would ask the House next to consider whether we have not gained a vast amount of experience in such matters since 1864. The Mercantile Marine of the country has increased from about £500,000 to about £4,000,000, and the Baltic and Scandinavian trade has been largely developed by private enterprize. The steamship trade in Hull and elsewhere is the growth of private enterprize, and it would be most dangerous to the interests of the country to place any check upon the development of that enterprize. That general observation has a somewhat material bearing upon the particular Bill under consideration, because I wish the House to understand that, although the Bill of 1864 gave the company power to run steamboats to eleven ports, they have actually only used those powers to the extent of running to three ports—Rotterdam, Hamburg, and Antwerp. Yet the House is asked—power having already been given to the company to run to eleven places, and that power having only been exercised with respect to three ports—to extend it to twenty places, all of them at a much larger distance, and being places of a very different character from those included in the previous Bill. Let me ask the House to bear in mind that the non-user of 3-11ths of their power has a material bearing upon the decision of the question. That non-user has, as it were, been held *in terrorem* over Grimsby, and private owners have not ventured to enter into a competition with the steamship powers possessed by a railway company who, at any moment, might divert the trade from private owners to themselves. We are told that Grimsby has not possessed the private enterprize it ought to have had. That is accounted for by the great effect which the non-user of the railway company's powers has had. There was, however, one place excepted in the Act of 1864 for which powers to run boats was applied for, and that is the port of Dieppe. The consequence has been that to this day between Grimsby and Dieppe there has existed an extensive service. The fact is, that where the interests of a private company are studied the public interests are, to a considerable extent, not properly considered. The Committee themselves felt the grave danger which might arise to the public interests from allowing such a

power to exist without being used. How did the Committee meet that forcible argument? They passed a provision that if the new powers are extended to twenty additional places, and are not exercised for five and a half years, they shall cease to exist. But such a provision must have the effect of crippling private enterprize for the next five and a half years, and will become perfectly illusory in the end. At the same time, I claim the advantage of the conclusion of the Committee that there ought to be some provision to protect a town from the monopoly of a railway company, and I maintain that if this provision is illusory, it is a reason why we should not accept the Report of the Committee or pass the Bill. The Bill seeks to extend the principle of giving a railway company power to run steamboats, and to enjoy the command of the sea; and in this case it is proposed to give the power to a company which already possesses command of the docks and of the land transit. The only competing railway company is the Great Northern, which has a connection south, but there is no competition whatever west, with the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire and the Midland Counties. I respectfully ask the House not to give these extensive powers to a railway company to run steamboats to almost every port in Europe, first of all because it has been proved recently that the policy of all railway companies is one of an essentially non-public character. The negotiations which have taken place in connection with the Railway Rates Bill show the difficulty of treating with companies who are in the position of monopolists, and the Railway and Canal Traffic Act is mainly directed against the onerous conditions which railway companies impose upon those who are under the necessity of making use of them. It is said, although I hardly believe that the statement is made seriously, that the giving of these powers to a railway company will increase competition, by affording a powerful railway company an opportunity of competing with private shipowners. It must be remembered that this railway company possess almost unlimited resources, and it is asked to apply those resources to a very different purpose from that for which they were were at first subscribed. The argument of competition is as fallacious as it is specious. There is no private competition whatever, except at Dieppe. If a competition were entered into by private steamship owners, the company would be able to charge literally nothing for the sea route, recouping themselves by increasing the railway charges where they would have no competition. At this moment there appears to be a tendency towards the creation of those great monopolies which distinguished the middle ages. We almost seem to be again reverting to that period. We have our trusts and our syndicates, which are the means by which monopolies are created, and I contend that the policy of this Bill is to carrying of articles of necessity, of food and of trade, upon a moderate footing. I beg, therefore, to move that the Bill be considered on this day six months.

Mr. KING (Hull, Central) seconded the Motion.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now" and insert the words "upon this day six months."—(*Sir Albert Rollit.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the question."

*Mr. HENEAGE (Grimsby): I do not think there has ever been an occasion on which the House has been asked to take such an unprecedented course as that which is now suggested on such slight grounds. The fact that we are without the evidence which has been taken upstairs gives an advantage to the critic who asks the House only to take a superficial view of the facts of the case. The Committee have, I submit, stated clearly in so many words that the evidence adduced satisfied them, and that it would be to the advantage of the public that the company should possess the powers which are sought, and that Standing Order 156 should not in this case be enforced. What are the real facts of the case? All the Committee have done has been to increase the powers of the railway company. My own opinion is that the right course in respect of the public interest was taken in 1864, and that the right course is being taken now. The hon. Gentleman the Member for South Islington (Sir A. Rollit) has stated that the

Report of the Committee is not in accordance with previous Reports, but I hold in my hand the Reports of nine Committees who have recommended that the Standing Order should not be enforced, and in none of these nine cases were reasons given. Among these cases are those of the Furness Railway Steamboats, the London and Blackwall Railway, the London and South-Western Railway, the Belfast, Holywood, and Bangor Railway, the London and North-Western Railway, and the London Brighton and South Coast Railway. I do not think that either on that point or on any other the argument of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Islington will hold good. The Bill is promoted in the interests of the great trading centres of Yorkshire, Lancashire, Lincolnshire, and the Midland Counties. Those centres of industry desire to have communication with the North Sea and the Baltic ports through Grimsby, believing that route to be the most economical and the best. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Islington has spoken of railway monopolies, but Grimsby appears to be dominated by a steamship owners' monopoly. The only real opponents of this measure are the companies of two great shipowners of Hull, who now hold at their mercy the whole carrying trade of the Baltic and the North Sea. There is no opposition from Hull itself, though strong influence has been brought to bear to prevent the people of Hull from giving their support to the Bill. They would in truth be only too glad to see some other line of ships running and freights reduced; and it is noteworthy that, although the Committee were compelled to ask the promoters not to bring forward any more witnesses, when they had brought forward not one tithe of the witnesses who were anxious to come forward from the great centres of industry, yet only five witnesses could be called in opposition to this Bill, and of these three were connected with the firm of Messrs. Wilson, of Hull. Another firm—Messrs. Bailey & Leatham—presented a petition against the Bill, but they did not appear as witnesses, and so come to the assistance of Messrs. Wilson. I do not know why this was so. They would have had a very good opportunity of being heard, but doubtless, acting upon the advice of their senior partner, they thought it would be wiser to come before the House rather than subject themselves to cross-examination. This is, I think, a most extraordinary way of doing business. The House remits to its Private Bill Committees the business of looking into all these matters, and if, after a Committee has gone carefully into the questions at issue, the House is to have every single case, however frivolous it may be, brought before it aftewards for review, it will be practically impossible to prosecute the business of the country. For my part, I cannot conceive why my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Islington refrained from going into the chair before the Committee. I have no hesitation in stating that this Bill, although brought forward and promoted by the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company, with which I am in no way connected, is really in the interests of the trade of the whole country. Its object is to relieve an important section of the country from the monopoly which is now going on. These companies, which have been running steamers to the Baltic and North Sea, have had since 1864 power to establish connections with Grimsby and the Northern ports. They have not availed themselves of those powers, but have pursued a selfish, dog-in-the-manger policy, neglecting to establish lines themselves, and refusing to allow anyone else to do so; and now they come to Parliament *in forma pauperis*, and urge the House to refuse to grant the powers provided by this Bill. These Hull companies are turning over their £60,000 a week, and yet they now come forward and ask that Grimsby should be prevented from having a line of steamers lest they should be ruined. I do not myself believe that these companies will be hurt. The hon. and learned Gentleman talked much of private enterprise. The Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company would be only too glad if private owners would establish these lines and not put them to the necessity of doing so; but as matters stand the House will not, I think, be justified in refusing to sanction this measure. I should like, if the House will permit me, to add one word on behalf of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway. I should like to remind the House that

the company have spent about three millions of money in building docks and promoting the trade of Grimsby and other towns to which their line runs, and it is hard if the company are now to be attacked because they are willing to give these important towns communications which other persons are not willing to give. The House is asked to upset the decision of this Committee for no reason whatever except that the Bill comes in conflict with the interests of two firms of shipowners at Hull. If the decision of a Committee is to be reviewed in every case there will be an end to all Private Bill legislation. I trust that in the interests of the public, as well as of Parliament itself, the House will stand by the decision of their Committee and not permit it to be upset in order to serve private interests.

MR. ATKINSON (Boston): If ever there was a case for the interference of the House this is that case, for it is not a question of one freight against another; but the great question is whether a railway company, having raised money for a specific purpose, shall be allowed to divert that money to another purpose. It is all very well for the right hon. Gentleman who represents Grimsby, and is therefore specially retained to speak on behalf of that port, to tell us what benefactors the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company are to that port. It is quite certain that if there had been no Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company there would be a very small Grimsby. But that is not the point. I have no interest in any firm in Hull now, but I was interested in the shipping of that port, until 15 years ago, for five and twenty years, and the reason why I retired was that I knew that no shipping business can be properly managed except by experts, and, although I was an expert once, when I ceased to occupy that position I declined to be responsible for a business over which I had no personal control. My hon. Friend opposite, the Gladstonian Member for Hull (Mr. C. Wilson), although sneered at by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), is the largest private shipowner in the world. If he wanted 80 or 90 ships in addition to the 80 or 90 he possesses already, he has transacted the business of a shipowner in so satisfactory a manner that he would find no difficulty in obtaining them. But if my hon. Friend's paper stood at the same discount as that of the clients of the right hon. Gentleman he would not be able to obtain another vessel. Why on earth should this House be asked to place more money in the hands of this railway company in order that they may be able to transact the risky business of shipowners? No doubt the right hon. Gentleman will tell me that the Chairman of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway Company is a most talented man, and so say I; but if that Gentleman is not as good an expert in shipping business as he is in the management of railways, I would advise him to stick to the work which he really understands, and not interfere with matters which he does not understand. In 1864, when the company promoted their Bill, I came up to fight it, and although after great consideration the powers they asked for were conceded, they have never since shown much anxiety to benefit the manufacturers of Lancashire or anybody else. Does the right hon. Member for Grimsby forget that at that time we succeeded in disinterring an agreement which showed that, instead of desiring to serve the manufacturers by providing an alternative route, they were ready to amalgamate with another company in putting a stop to competition. ["Divide," and "Short speeches."]

*MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Member to confine himself to the subject before the House.

MR. ATKINSON: Yes, Sir; and I trust that you will procure order for me so that I may speak to the point.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must caution the hon. Member not to be disorderly.

MR. ATKINSON: The point raised by the right hon. Member for Grimsby is that two firms are largely interested in this question—namely, Wilson & Co. and Bailey & Leatham. Those companies represent a great part of the trade of Hull, but not by any means the whole of it, and although they may be considered interested, the right hon. Gentleman is just as much interested as those firms are. I maintain that it is contrary to public policy to place in the hands of a railway company the monopoly for which they now ask. The

remarks which have been made by the right hon. Member for Grimsby as to private interests, do not in the least affect me, although at one time I happened to be an expert, and I trust the House will not be led away by that sort of argument. On the contrary, I hope this House will plainly tell the railway companies that having had certain powers conceded to them 25 years ago, they must use those powers before coming here again.

*MR. DUFF (Banffshire): I think the House must have listened with great interest to the prolonged remarks of the hon. Gentleman who has just brought in a Bill to limit the duration of speeches.

MR. ATKINSON: Perhaps I may be allowed to explain that I have never myself spoken for 15 minutes.

*MR. DUFF: It is not necessary that I should discuss that point with the hon. Gentleman, I think he has given a practical illustration of the necessity of his Bill. To return to the question before the House, I wish to say as Chairman of the Committee upstairs, that the hon. Member for South Islington has criticised our Report somewhat severely. He complains that we have assigned no reasons for not complying with the Standing Order, the reasons stated in the Committee's Report, and in accordance with precedents. As to whether the Committee of 1864 were right in conceding steamship powers to this company was not the question we had to deal with. What we found was that a Committee of this House had granted powers to the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company to run steamboats to certain ports, and the granting of that power had encouraged the company to lay out a very large sum of money, amounting to £2,300,000, for the construction of docks at Grimsby. These docks have not afforded to the town of Grimsby and the surrounding district the accommodation which was expected from them. It appears that the steamboat traffic goes past Grimsby to Hull, and is then brought down the Humber for a distance of 18 or 20 miles to Grimsby, As Grimsby possesses many natural advantages, it is thought that it would be of advantage to have direct communication, seeing that the Hull steamers have practically ceased to call at Grimsby to deliver part cargoes. ["No."] Well, the evidence before the Committee was that, although in 1886 20 ships called at Grimsby, in 1888 the number had dwindled down to two. Not only is Grimsby affected, but all the towns to the West and Midland Counties. Evidence from Barnsley, Sheffield, and other towns, abundantly proved the necessity of this communication. The Committee went closely into the matter and the impression left on my mind was that the opposition to the Bill was due entirely to local feeling between Grimsby and Hull. That was the whole nature of the opposition. There was one argument used by the hon. Member for South Islington which I should like to refer to. He said that if Parliament grants these powers to the railway company they will be able to run their steamers at a loss and to make it up by their charges as carriers by railway. That is quite a mistake, because the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincoln Railway is not the only railway that goes to Grimsby. The Great Northern Railway goes there as well, and the land and the sea rates are quite separate, being arranged by the railway companies interested and a conference of shipowners.

SIR A. ROLLIT: What I said was that for the communication to Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the West, there was practically only one railway.

*MR. DUFF: As a matter of fact, the Great Northern Railway goes to Grimsby and carries on a trade which amounts to something like 78,000 tons annually. It has been further stated that although the company obtained power to run steamboats to 11 places they have only availed themselves of the privilege in three cases—Rotterdam, Hamburg, and Antwerp. Surely if the object of the Company is to compete with private shipowners and to destroy their property they would avail themselves of all the powers which the Legislature has conferred upon them. The Committee had to consider whether in granting a further extension of the powers of the company, they were acting in the public interests. They sat for four days; they went into the matter most exhaustively and they came to the conclusion that the public interests would be best served by granting the powers asked for. I do

not think that anything has passed in the discussion to-day which tends to shake the decision at which the Committee arrived. Personally, I can say with confidence that I never had a more simple case put before me, and I make a strong appeal to the House to support the decision of the Committee.

*Mr. HULSE (Salisbury): As a Member of the Committee, I rise for the purpose of opposing the Motion of the hon. Member for South Islington, and to support my hon Friend the Member for Banff, who, as Chairman of the Committee with whom I recently served, paid the closest attention to the question at issue. I will not presume to trouble the House with any personal explanation of the reasons which induced me to come to the decision I did. I have simply risen for the purpose of entering a protest, in the strongest possible terms, against the personal element which has been introduced in the matter by an opposition hailing from Hull. With regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for South Islington, I would remind him that a Committee of this House is not bound to consider personal or private interests, and I do not think the House need be alarmed at the prospect of the port of Hull having another rival in the steamboat carrying trade to the Baltic and Norwegian Coasts. Seeing that the great landed interest of this country has been ruined by foreign competition and by undue preference for foreign transport, it is a matter of some astonishment to find all the forces of the shipping interest in this House mustering its forces to secure a monopoly, and to prevent competition with the corn-growing countries of the North. The existing facilities for the Baltic and Scandinavian trade are altogether insufficient, and additional facilities are required. Certainly, the evidence placed before the Committee in favour of extending the powers granted to the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincoln Railway Company in 1864 was overwhelming. Sir, I venture to think the House will stultify its independence if it takes the course which has been suggested, after the Committee has given four days' careful consideration to the Bill. This House has hitherto risen superior to all private interests, but if great shipowners who have amassed large fortunes by high rates—and all lack of competition—are to be allowed to come down and dictate to the House, then the independence and usefulness of the good work of the Committees will be at an end. I am sure that no hon. Member can judge without being acquainted with the evidence which was tendered before the Committee of the practical result of the monopoly possessed by Hull, to which allusion has been made. I will only add that if competition is the life of business, and if Free Trade is the source of commercial prosperity, I venture to think that the House has no right to suppress one body of traders for the benefit of another. Hon. Members may think I have spoken somewhat strongly, but I am sure they will acquit me of any personal motives or personal feeling in the matter. I only trust that the personal agitation of an interested clique will receive at the hands of honourable Members that reproof which is justly deserved, and that the decision of the Committee may be upheld.

*Mr. J. C. STEVENSON (South Shields): I will not detain the House one single minute except to ask it to remember that this is a much wider question than any mere local dispute. I see in the Bill a long list of ports to which the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincoln Company intends to run vessels and compete with the general shipowners of the country in the trade with those ports. I wish to say that the shipowners of the Tyne feel very strongly in this matter. Ships are trading regularly to nearly all these ports, to which the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincoln seek power to send their vessels. I hope the House will carefully guard the rights of private owners. A Standing Order controlling this kind of power has been made, and when powers are granted the special reasons for doing so are to be set forth by the Chairman of the Committee. I never saw a weaker Report than that of the Chairman of the Committee on the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincoln (Steamboats) Bill, and I have heard that the Committee were not unanimous in the matter. There is no monopoly on the sea, but it is possible to get a monopoly of access to ports, and this is what the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincoln Company are striving after.

Being owners of docks, are they to become shipowners, and as shipowners are they to become merchants, to make cargoes for their ships? I think Parliament should carefully guard against any proposal of this kind. I maintain that an exceptional case has not been proved, and I shall vote for the rejection of the Bill.

*MR. C. H. WILSON (Hull, West): I must ask for the indulgence of the House for a short time, because I have been personally referred to. One hon. Member talked about large shipowners coming down and dictating to the House. If the hon. Member had been in the House as long as I have he would hardly have made such a remark. I can hardly imagine that any Member accustomed to the usages of the House would be so foolish as to attempt to dictate to hon. Members. The hon. Member for Grimsby has told the House that this is a frivolous opposition, and that is one of the main reasons why he objected to the course which has been taken. But is it a frivolous opposition? It appears to me to be connected with a question which possibly aims at the supremacy of England on the sea. We have been told by the supporters of this Railway Bill that shipowners are monopolists, but the real monopolists are the railway companies themselves. The sea is open to every one. We have been told that this is a question for Hull only, but it is nothing of the sort. Every hon. Member connected with the north-east coast of England knows that in these districts the people are more interested even than the people of Hull themselves. I believed that these powers, if put into force, will injure the interests of north-eastern ports much more than those of Hull. If it were Parliamentary to say so, there appears to me to be a lamentable amount of ignorance displayed by certain hon. Gentlemen whom I will not name. I am very much surprised to hear that Grimsby is the most direct route for Lancashire and Manchester. The most direct route into the interior of England, as far as the Humber ports are concerned, is the port of Goole. The port of Goole is 40 miles nearer manufacturing districts than the port of Grimsby, and the port of Goole is in connection with the powerful railway company of the Lancashire and Yorkshire, and also the Aire and Calder Canal, and there is a sufficient supply of steamers at that port for the trade without giving power to the railway company. Grimsby, too, would have had an ample supply of steamers if it had not been for the course the directors of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincoln took in 1864. In that year, before the enormous development of the Mercantile Marine of England, this company, having also a monopoly of the docks at Grimsby, obtained powers to run to eleven ports, but of these eleven ports, after 25 years they have used their powers to three only, and now they come before Parliament and ask for practically unlimited power to run to every port where private shipowners have, after hard work, succeeded in establishing and developing trades. They now say, "We shall come and use our capital to take away the trades from the private owners." That may be fair, and it may not; but the end of it will be that if they obtain these powers the railway company, with the profits on their railway rates, will be able to run their vessels on much cheaper rates than the private owners, and will ultimately drive the latter out of the field. That will not tend much to the benefit of the general public. Once this monopoly is established it will do away with private enterprise, which I unhesitatingly maintain has made the greatness of this country and instead establish a huge railway monopoly. I believe the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield has been urging hon. Members to vote for this Bill. [MR. MUNDELLA dissented.] I have heard such is the case. I also believe the right hon. Gentleman has stated that his constituents are much interested in this Bill, but I think he has made a mistake. The Manchester, Sheffield and Lincoln Company by maintaining the rates on the canal to Sheffield, which is their property, so as to keep up the railway rates, have acted very prejudicially to the interests of Sheffield manufacturers and the collieries in the district, so much so that a powerful company has been formed, and they are before Parliament with their scheme to endeavour to get the canal out of the hands of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincoln

Company, and so break down this monopoly. Although the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincoln Company now come to Parliament and say what great things they are going to do for the traders. They have in some instances almost destroyed trades. Trades have had to be given up and removed to the west coast in consequence of these high rates of carriage. What was the object of the Railway Rates Bill of last year? As far as I can grasp the feeling of the Committee on that Bill, there was a strong opinion that the monopolist powers of railway companies should be restricted, but here in the House if I am able to gauge the feeling of the majority of Members present, they with their eyes open are going to grant an increased monopoly to one railway company which I unhesitatingly said will not be in the interests of manufacturers and traders of this country, but will in the end be detrimental to their interests and the great interests of the Mercantile Marine of this country. I may also say another thing. If the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincoln Company want to do all these great things for the traders of England, they at the present moment have their railway station in Hull, they can run from Hull as cheaply as they could from Grimsby, they have equal facilities for doing work at Hull and at Grimsby, and that is one very good reason why this scheme should not be sanctioned. I could say a great deal more, but time is limited, and knowing that the House does not like to have its time occupied with private business of this sort, it is not advisable to go further into argument. I maintain unhesitatingly that this is not the case of a Hull monopoly. The fact that one firm alone has three times the steam tonnage that these trades require is in itself a strong argument against the alleged necessity for further shipping power to this company. I say unhesitatingly it is not required in the interest of traders, and it will be granting an increased monopoly to railway companies in this country if it is to be taken as a precedent. I hope hon. Members will consider very carefully before they give their vote in favour of this great railway monopoly.

MR. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): No one can complain of personal or local jealousy in matters of trade, but I think the House has a right to remember that when Bills are committed to the care of Members upstairs, and evidence is entered into there at full length upon every point which arises, it may reasonably complain if an attempt is made to re-open the Bill after a decision has been arrived at by the Committee to which it was referred, upon grounds which that Committee have had brought before them at very great length. Any attempt of that kind should come from persons who are so far removed from any suggestion of mere rival interests as to command the attention of the House. We have heard the opposition to this Bill. It is first of all moved by the hon. Member for Islington, who is not disconnected with Hull, and seconded by the hon. Member opposite, who is one of the Members for Hull. It is supported by another hon. Member for Hull, and the last speaker was another hon. Member for the same constituency, the latter having also been heard at full length before the Committee to whom the Bill was referred. Everything that hon. Members have said now, and a great deal more, was said then. There, all the evidence could be examined and tested, and the Committee having done so came to a full and clear decision on the point. For my part, I refuse to enter into the merits of the case when nothing new is presented, and under such circumstances I hope the House will by a sufficient majority show its sense of the inconvenience, to say nothing more, of attempts to revise a decision so arrived at, or to prevent such a course being repeated rashly in the future.

MR. T. HEALY (Longford, N.): I rise for the purpose of expressing my entire dissent from the doctrine laid down by the distinguished Chairman of Committees. I do so on the ground that I decline to accept the doctrine that three or four gentlemen in a room upstairs and a number of lawyers nagging at them are in a far better position for deciding upon a question than hon. Members are here. I take my stand upon the ground that this is an attempt by a large Corporation which has quite sufficient money to pay its shareholders a reasonable amount of interest already, to prevent ordinary private traders from getting that reasonable

amount of gain on their undertakings to which, I think, as ordinary citizens of the country, they are entitled, independent of the interests of great Corporations.

The House divided:—Ayes 175; Noes 85.—(Division List, No. 125)

Main question put; Bill considered; to be read the third time.

FRESHWATER, YARMOUTH, AND NEWPORT RAILWAY BILL.

Order for Second Reading, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. RICHARD CHAMBERLAIN (Islington, W.): I beg to move the Amendment that stands in my name. I do so, not with the object of preventing the construction of a railway that will take the public to a certain place, but on the ground that it is undesirable to allow the construction of railways which will go through a place that owes its charm to quiet seclusion and natural beauty. I and those who support me are raising this objection not, as has been said in the statement issued in support of the Bill, in the interests of the inhabitants of Freshwater, but in the interest of the public at large, and of all those who value the picturesque in this country and do not desire to see it interfered with by the building speculator or the contractor. The proposed railway is an extension of the Freshwater Railway to Totland Bay, which is only a mile and three-quarters from the Freshwater Railway Station. The railway would actually bisect the whole of a peninsula "½ miles long by 1½ broad, and the result will be very seriously to impair the charm that makes the great attraction of this part of the Isle of Wight. I do not speak in the interest of the innkeepers and tradesmen of Freshwater; but, as a matter of fact, the inhabitants of Freshwater are strongly opposed to the Bill, and on one of the three petitions I have been asked to present against the measure the first signature is that of Lord Tennyson. It is said that those who have objections to the Bill should raise them before the Select Committee. I venture to submit that a Select Committee is a tribunal before which objections raised by private individuals can fitly be heard, but it is not one before which an objection of a public character can be taken. The question on which we want the House to express an opinion is whether or not in the public interest it is well that a place like the Isle of Wight, the garden of England, should be unnecessarily cut up by railway. This line, I say, is altogether unnecessary. The promoters of the Bill say that Totland is a growing place. It may be, but it only has 200 inhabitants at the present time. There is no village there. There are a few houses and an hotel which does not pay, and I believe that the secret of the construction of the line is that the railway company intend to acquire the hotel, and I believe that the creation of a building estate is contemplated. If the House rejects the Bill and does so wrongly, the wrong can be set right next year, or the year afterwards; but if, on the other hand, this concession is granted to these building speculators or hotel proprietors, any injury that is done will be irrevocable. The promoters suggest that they can increase the traffic to and from the Isle of Wight by means of steamers from Bournemouth. I submit that that is absolutely ridiculous. At present the routes to the island are from Portsmouth to Ryde, and from Lymington to Yarmouth. Those who adopt the last named route have to cross the Solent, to traverse several miles of sea, and to land at a very exposed place. It is only in the height of the season and in calm weather that that route is used at all. It may be that steamers taking cargoes of cheap trippers may go that way, but then I suggest that the point of debarcation is a wrong one, and that they only ought to go to Alum Bay and the Needles, which are the principal attractions of the cheap trippers. If this Bill be rejected and the railway should be shown in some subsequent year to be necessary, the development of the existing traffic will show whether the terminus of the line ought to be nearer Alum Bay or Totland Bay. I do not think a community of 200 persons, like that at Totland Bay, has a right to a railway which will spoil the whole country. It is true that there is a brickfield and a small pottery at Totland Bay, but they do not employ more than

100 persons, and when the line gets beyond them it will seriously impair the beauty and picturesqueness of the district. The history of this railway company has been one of continual changes of mind and procrastination. Their first Act was granted in 1880. In 1883 they got an extension of time and further powers. In 1887 they again got further powers, and at the present time, nine years after the first Act was obtained, the line is not opened for passenger traffic, and a portion of it has not been completed at all. I submit that it would be unwise to grant further powers to a company which has shown such uncertainty and changeableness with regard to its plans, before the present line is even open for traffic. For the reasons I have given, I ask the House to assent to my Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the question in order to add the words—

"Having regard to the character of the south-western corner of the Isle of Wight, and the railway accommodation at present authorized, it is undesirable to give any further powers to a Company which is only now opening for passenger traffic a line the construction of which was authorized in 1880."—(*Mr. Richard Chamberlain.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I admit that if ever there was a case for careful examination of a Bill by a Select Committe this is one. I do not, however, think the hon. Gentleman opposite can have spoken from personal knowledge of this line of railway, as he certainly made one or two curious statements with regard to the geographical position. The company have at present obtained powers for a line from Newport to Freshwater, and the question now is whether that line ought to be extended for about a mile and a half in the direction of Totland Bay. Knowing the country, I can say that it does not spoil any district or pass through any picturesque country. At the same time, I think the questions involved are subjects for determination by a Select Committee, before which those who are in favour of and those who are against the Bill can give evidence. The hon. Member has referred to the financial position of the company and to the delay which has taken place in completing its undertaking. It is, however, common knowledge that, with regard to railways in sparsely-populated districts, and certainly with respect to the Isle of Wight railways things are not made with such rapidity as they are where the population is larger. Certainly, if there has been undue procrastination, that will be a matter for the Committee to determine. In my constituency opinions seem to vary as to the merits or demerits of the scheme, but I think that in any case it would be premature to reject the Bill without referring it to a Select Committee.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I find myself on this occasion in the pleasurable position of agreeing entirely with the hon. and learned Attorney General. The hon. Member for Islington (Mr. R. Chamberlain) opposes the Bill on public grounds. The public grounds are that the Isle of Wight is the garden of England, and that it ought not to be cut up by railways.

MR. R. CHAMBERLAIN: Unnecessarily.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Well, unnecessarily. That is the very question that ought to be referred to a Committee—whether this Bill is necessary or unnecessary. I have here a copy of a petition stating that a considerable number of the inhabitants of the island do not object to, but like, the scheme. I protest against the doctrine that certain parts of the country are to be called gardens of England, and ought, therefore, to be kept out of the civilization of England. As to the trippers, I am one myself. I want to go and see places, and I want to go as far as I can by rail. I have never yet discovered that a railway spoils the beauty of any district. After all, what is a railway? It is a road. We hear poets talking about the beauties of roads and about the smoke curling up from the cottages. In railways the smoke is always moving along. I myself think a railway is a beautiful object. When I see a railway in a district I know that I can get away from that district if I do not want to stop there long. A railway reminds me of London and of this House, and of lots of pleasant things. I must enter my protest against the principle that we

ought not to refer a Railway Bill to a Select Committee because it is supposed that it will interfere with the beauty of a district.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I do not propose to discuss with so high an æsthetic authority as the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) the question of the beauty of railroads. Some of us think that railroads are beautiful enough in their own places, but certainly they are not beautiul when they are out of their places. The hon. Member for Northampton regards this scheme as a proposal to extend the civilization of England to Totland Pier. The pier is a mile and a half beyond the present terminus, and the only difference the line will make will be that it will enable people to go from Freshwater to Totland Pier by railroad instead of in a fly. Many of those who object to the line on the ground of the injury it will inflict on the scenery will have no *locus standi* before a Select Committee, and a special instruction would be needed to enable the Committee to consider a question of that kind. I can say, from information supplied to me, that a large number of people in the Isle of Wight object to the Bill, and think that if carried the effect upon the scenery will be very prejudicial. Being unable to urge their objection in any other way, they are obliged to do so through the mouths of hon. Members of this House.

Question put, and agreed to.

QUESTIONS.

IRELAND—JUDICIAL RENTS.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland if he could state in how many of the 8,861 holdings given in Parliamentary Paper No. 81, of Session 1889, was the rental judicial, and in how many not so; and, what amount of the £214,922 rental of these holdings was judicial, and what not so?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, East): The Land Commissioners regret that they are unable to give the information sought in this question, as the books from which the Parliamentary Paper mentioned was compiled do not distinguish between cases of judicial and non-judicial rents, while to make an examination for the purpose into the agreement in each case would seriously interfere with the disposal of the Commissioners' current business.

GREYSTONES HARBOUR.

MR. WILLIAM CORBET (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if a memorial has been received from the inhabitants of Greystones, county Wicklow, in which it is stated that the harbour recently constructed there at a cost of £10,000 is ueless, being almost completely filled up with shingle; whether any inquiry has been made as to the truth of the statement; and, what course the Treasury propose to take so as to make the harbour available for the use of the fishermen?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. W. L. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I have received a most careful Report from the Board of Public Works upon the subject of Greystones Harbour, which I shall be happy to show to the hon. Member. I propose to sanction the measures recommended by the Board to prevent the further deposit of shingle.

FISHING RIGHTS IN SCOTCH LOCHS.

MR. FRASER MACKINTOSH (Invernessshire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether there is any law preventing the public from fishing for trout during the season for freshwater lakes in Scotland, used as national waterways for navigation, such as Lochs Ness, Oich, and Lochy, in Invernessshire?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): The question whether the public have a right to fish in a particular loch is not one which can be determined by any general formula, such as that suggested in the question. I find that the legal position of the lochs named in the question has been the subject of litigation between M'Donell, of Glengary, and the Caledonian Canal Commissioners, and the hon. Gentleman will find the subject discussed in *Stewart on Fishing* (p. 255).

THE EDUCATION CODE.

MR. JOHN TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can now name a day on which the discussion on the

Education Code will be taken; and, whether he can give an assurance that the House shall not be committed to an acceptance of the Code till such discussion shall have taken place?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): I hope that the state of public business will admit of a discussion upon the new Code during the last week in June. I can assure my hon. Friend that the House shall not be committed to an acceptance of the Code until such discussion has taken place.

HAKIN LANDING PLACE.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) (in the absence of Admiral Mayne): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that in 1876 the Board of Trade granted permission to the Milford Docks Company to build a pier at Hakin Point, Milford Haven, upon the representation that it was "essential for the necessities of the inhabitants," such necessity being caused by the Docks Company having enclosed the whole "Pill" which had theretofore been used for the boats; that this pier has remained open for the use of the public until the present year, and that now it has been closed by the Docks Company, and that consequently the inhabitants, for whose necessities it was admittedly built, have no longer the free use of it, and that the Dock Company propose to make the people pay for using it; and whether he will take such steps as are necessary to enforce the conditions upon which the Board of Trade granted the site and the permission to build the pier, the spirit and the intention of the grant having been evidently broken to the injury of the inhabitants of the place?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): In December, 1876, the Milford Docks Company submitted for sanction the plans of a landing slip at Hakin, which they were authorized by Parliament to construct, as incidental to the works authorized by the Milford Docks Act, 1874, and the Board of Trade, having satisfied themselves that that work would not interfere with navigation, assented to it in the following year, on the single condition that the end of the slipway was properly lighted. I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the statement in the second paragraph of the hon. and gallant Member's question. The Docks Company, at the time they made their application, stated that it was deemed "essential for the necessities of the inhabitants of Hakin," but even if that statement had not been made, the Board of Trade, in the absence of objections to the application in the interests of navigation, would not have been at liberty to refuse their consent. The Board regret that they have no power to compel the company to finish the work, or to maintain it for the free use of the public.

INDIA—PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION—DISTRESS IN GANJAM.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of of State for India whether, in view of his statement on the 6th inst. respecting the promised inquiry into Indian affairs now to be abandoned, and his reference to the Public Service Commission and the Finance Committee, the Government will give an early for the discussion of these Reports: and, whether he proposes this Session to introduce any legislative measure to give effect to any of the recommendations of the Public Service Commission; and I also desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has any information from the Viceroy of India as to the state of affairs in Ganjam?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): No intimation has reached Her Majesty's Government of any desire on the part of any Member of the House to take the sense of the House on any questions arising out of these Reports. It is not yet ascertained whether any legislation will be necessary to give effect to such of the recommendations of the Public Service Commission as the Government may ultimately adopt. The following telegrams have been received, dated May 21, with reference to the cholera outbreak at Ganjam—

"General condition of Ganjam as to scarcity practically unchanged. Prices risen slightly. Number of persons employed on relief works about 15,000. Pecuniary relief about 1,000. Deaths from cholera in the district, as already reported in my letter of last week, very great —over 1,000 weekly. Comparatively few cases

of cholera have occurred at famine relief works. Additional medical officers despatched. No deaths from starvation. Weekly telegrams will be sent every Tuesday, that being the day when figures are received here."

And the Governor of Madras, telegraphing from Ootacamund, May 22, says—"Cholera in Ganjam bad. I propose to go there as soon as possible."

IRELAND—EDUCATIONAL — ERASMUS SMITH'S ENDOWMENTS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland to explain why the Commissioners under the Educational Endowments (Ireland) Act have not dealt, in spite of the lapse of almost four years, with the Erasmus Smith Educational Endowment; are they aware that this delay, depriving the children of the tenants on the Erasmus Smith estates, and "20 other poor children" within two miles of each of the Erasmus Smith Grammar Schools, of the use of their legal rights to the endowment, is felt to be most unjust to those children; and when will the Commissioners deal with the Erasmus Smith Endowment?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. H. MADDEN, Dublin University): The Educational Endowments Commissioners state that before proceeding to settle a draft scheme for the future management of Erasmus Smith's Endowments they thought it necessary to hold a public inquiry in Dublin, and also at each of the schools at Drogheda, Ennis, Galway, and Tipperary, as well as at Sligo, where one of the estates is situated. Occasion was taken to hold these inquiries when the Commissioners were inquiring as to other endowments in the same localities. The inquiries are now completed, and the Commissioners expect to publish a draft scheme in October next. The claims of the tenants to receive education in accordance with the intention of the founder are under careful consideration. The time of the Commission has been very fully occupied in dealing with the cases of other endowments not less urgent, as to which the preliminary inquiries have been completed.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman is it a reasonable thing, now that the inquiries which primarily numbered only four are concluded, to postpone the scheme until October?

MR. MADDEN: I have no doubt at all that the Commissioners are proceeding with the scheme as rapidly as the claims of other endowments with which they have to deal will allow them.

MR. T. M. HEALY: In view of the great importance of these matters, I will take occasion, on the Vote for the expenses of the Commission, to call attention to the great delay in dealing with these endowments.

INDIA—NATIVE GOVERNMENTS AND SPECULATORS — REPORT OF THE DECCAN MINING COMMISSION.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the under Secretary of State for India (1) whether any effect has yet been given to the warning in the last paragraph of the Report of the Committee on the Deccan Mining Company, against allowing direct communications between Native Indian Governments and speculators on the London Stock Exchange; whether (2), notwithstanding the exposure by the Committee of the frauds which resulted from such direct communications in the case of that Mining Company, the matter has been again settled directly between the agents of the Native Government and the speculators, or whether the Government of India has controlled the negotiations, and sanctioned the arrangement come to; and (3), whether there is any truth in the report that, so far from the concession shown by the Committee to have been obtained by the fraudulent sharing of the profits by the agent of the Native Government being cancelled, the term of the monopoly originally granted has been considerably extended?

*SIR JOHN GORST: 1. The principle of allowing no direct communications between Native Indian Governments and speculators on the London Stock Exchange is accepted, and will be acted on by the Secretary of State and Government of India. As to 2 and 3, no arrangement has been sanctioned. The terms of a proposed arrangement are now under discussion by the Secretary of State, and it would, therefore, be premature to state their nature or scope.

THE EGYPTIAN DEBT.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, if the proposals for converting the Egyptian Privileged Debt are accepted, existing holders are to have the option of consenting to a lower rate of interest without charge for conversion or whether the whole is to be repaid under arrangements with financiers, who will again have commissions, charges, and profits on the new loans; and, with whom rested the regulation of those commissions and charges under a provisional agreement said to have been made; also whether there was any truth in the telegram published this morning to the effect that in addition to the Privileged Debt the other Debts were to be added to the loan?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): I am not in a position to make any statement with regard to an arrangement which has not yet been officially communicated by the Egyptian Government and the negotiation of which rests entirely with them.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Yes, but did not the right hon. Gentleman say that Her Majesty's Government in common with the other Powers had been consulted, and did he not say that they had consulted their law advisers and had given their assent to the proposals of the Egpytian Government; and that being the case, Her Majesty's Government must be aware of the terms of the arrangement?

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: I think I have already stated Her Majesty's Government were of opinion there was no legal objection to the Egyptian Government endeavouring to make the arrangement, but it will be for them as one of the Powers to give or withhold their assent when the proposals are in a form to be submitted to them.

IRELAND—INCREASE OF RABIES.

MR. PINKERTON (Galway): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a statement that the prevalence of rabies throughout certain districts in the North of Ireland had increased lately to an alarming extent, and whether he would cause instructions to be issued to the Boards of Guardians and Local Authorities to use every effort to check the spread of the disease, and order a stricter supervision on the part of the police?

MR. MADDEN: I am not aware of what statement is referred to by the hon. Member in the first paragraph. The Official Returns on the subject, which are carefully prepared, show some increase in cases of rabies in the North of Ireland, though happily not a very great increase, the total number of cases reported from the whole of Ulster this year up to May 11 being 55, as compared with 46 during the corresponding period of last year. Some cases recently occurred in the unions of Armagh, Banbridge, and Downpatrick, and the respective Boards of Guardians have made regulations under the Rabies Order for the control of dogs. The police are fully alive to their duties in the matter.

THE CONVICTION OF THOMAS LOVE.

MR. W. CORBET: On behalf of Mr. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.), I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will inquire into circumstances regarding the conviction of Thomas Love in 1885, and now in Mountjoy Prison, Dublin; and, whether it is true that circumstances have, in this case, been brought under the attention of the Home Office which will warrant an investigation into whether justice has not been done?

MR. MADDEN: My right hon. Friend has asked me to reply to this question. The convict, Thomas Love, is now undergoing his fourth sentence of penal servitude, the conviction being for two cases of larceny after previous convictions, which were for sheep stealing, larceny, receiving stolen goods, burglary, and subsequent felony. His case has been under review in connection with memorials submitted by him to two successive Lord Lieutenants, who decided that the law should take its course. I am informed that no circumstances have in this case been brought under the attention of the Home Office.

THE *TRAFALGAR.*

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what amount of extra weight has been worked into the *Trafalgar* in excess of that in the original design; what is its effect upon her immersion; and whether a Board Minute of February, 1887, makes the Controller responsible that no deviations from the designs approved by the Board shall take place which would in any way affect the immersion of the ship when completed for service?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): As explained at paragraph 4, page 5, of Parliamentary Paper, C. 5,635 of 1889, it is estimated that 500 tons of additional weight will be worked into the *Trafalgar* in excess of her original design, with a corresponding increase of immersion of 10 inches. The hon. Member has been correctly informed with regard to the responsibility imposed upon the Controller in the matter referred to; therefore every increase of weight, however small, has to receive the sanction of the Board (of which the Controller is a member) before it can be added to a ship in progress of construction or in commission.

THE NEW UNIVERSITY FOR LONDON.

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the cause of the delay in the publication and distribution to Members of the Report of the Royal Commission on the question of a new University for London which was laid upon the Table on 3rd May?

*MR. JACKSON: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer at the same time the question of the hon. Member for South Islington (Sir A. Rollit), who asks when the Report will be printed and circulated. I have made inquiry, and am assured that there has been no unnecessary delay in the printing office. On the 3rd of May the printers received from the Secretary the Report only, and it was not until a week or ten days later that they received a complete copy of the evidence and appendices. I understand that the Secretary is still making a few further corrections. I have called the attention of the printers to the interest with which the issue of the Report is awaited, and they will no doubt do all they can to secure the issue without delay.

POST OFFICE AT CWMAVON.

SIR H. HUSSEY VIVIAN (Swansea, District): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the person recently appointed Postmaster for Cwmavon, a Welsh speaking district, is unable to speak Welsh, and whether the right hon. Gentleman will on that ground reconsider the appointment; and whether he can arrange that two deliveries should be made in the central portion of Cwmavon as well as in the lower parts?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): I find that the Postmaster recently appointed is unable to speak Welsh, but he understands it, and his sons who assist him in the duties of the office have a good command of the language. He is very well and favourably known in the locality, and this appointment has, I understand, given the greatest satisfaction. Under these circumstances, I do not think it necessary to cancel the appointment. As regards the second portion of the hon. Member's question, I have already sanctioned arrangements for affording two deliveries in the day in the central portion of Cwmavon, and they will be carried into effect with as little delay as possible.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether Mr. Calcraft's letter of May 18 regarding electric lighting in the Metropolis correctly expresses the present intention of the Board of Trade to adopt Major Marindin's proposals to set aside the provisions of the Act of Parliament of 1888 requiring the previous consent of the Local Authority in many cases; whether the Board of Trade has approved the proposal of Major Marindin that the mere objection by a Local Authority should not be considered sufficient to exclude any company unless the Local Authority was itself ready at once to undertake the supply of electricity, and give evidence

of its intention to do so; and whether that alone will be sufficient ground for a special Report in each case stating grounds for dispensing with the consent of the Local Authority as required by the Act; and whether, in cases where he finally determines to give concessions to companies without the consent of the Local Authorities, he will take care that his special Report on each case is laid before Parliament in sufficient time?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes, Sir. Mr. Calcraft's letter correctly expresses the present intention of the Board of Trade. Major Marindin's Report, however, does not go so far as is suggested in the second paragraph of the question. If in any case the consent of a Local Authority is dispensed with, the special report of the Board of Trade will be laid at the earliest possible moment before Parliament. It would not be consistent with the provisions of the Act of 1888 to insert in any Provisional Order any clause hindering or restricting the subsequent granting of a license or Provisional Order to the Local Authority or any other person within the same area.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Does not Major Marindin use the words on the part of the Board of Trade that the mere objection should not be considered sufficient to exclude any company under the Local Authority was ready to undertake the supply and had shown their intention of doing so; and in regard to main roads and bridges is not the County Council an Authority whose consent should be required?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH desired notice of the question.

NATAL SUGAR.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, West): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Secretary of State approved, by a letter in 1888, of a Customs arrangement between the Cape, Natal and the Orange Free State, by which sugar, the produce of Natal, was to be charged in the Cape with a duty of 6s. 3d. per cwt., whilst all other sugar, including beet sugar from Europe, was to be charged double, or 12s. 6d.; is this consistent with Article 4 of the Convention, which says that no higher duties shall be imposed on beet than on cane sugar in any of the Colonies; has the Secretary of State withdrawn his approval of differential duty since the Convention was signed, or is it still in force; and will the Government produce any correspondence on the subject?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron HENRY DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): It will be seen by comparing the terms of the Secretary of State's despatch of the 16th of April, 1888, with those of Sir Arthur Havelock's despatch of the 5th of March (published at pages 36 and 39 of Blue-book C. 5,390), that no approval was expressed of the particular clause of the Customs arrangement as to sugar. I would also observe that any communication made by the Secretary of State in April, 1888, could not have been at variance with Article 4 of the Convention, inasmuch as that Article was only proposed by Her Majesty's Government at the meeting of the Conference on the 16th of August, 1888. As I stated in reply to an almost identical question put to me on the 11th of April by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, Natal is not a member of the Customs Union, and there are no special provisions in it relating to a differential duty on Natal sugar. There is little correspondence on the subject, but such Papers as it may be desirable to publish will be presented to Parliament.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, South): May I ask whether such differential duty in favour of Natal sugar does not exist?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I have already answered that question.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR: Does it exist?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: No; there is no differential duty on account of Natal sugar.

INDIA—THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION AND THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the inquiries by the Finance Committee and those conducted by the Public Service Commission were so strictly limited, that the Committee was "debarred from interfering with arrangements deliberately made and sanctioned by the Secretary of State;" that they were prevented

from inquiring into the status of the Governors of Madras and Bombay, the salaries of Civil servants, the system of issuing Government loans and concessions or guarantees to railway companies; and, whether, if his attention has not hitherto been called to such limitations of the inquiries of the Committee and Commission, he will consider the advisability of giving effect to the promise of the Government for a Parliamentary inquiry in these respects?

SIR J. GORST: The Secretary of State is aware that the inquiries of the Finance Committee and Public Service Commission were directed by the instructions of the Governor of India to definite practical objects. He is not aware of the existence of any branches of research in relation to the administration of the Government of India beyond the scope of the inquiries already made, to which the attention of a Parliamentary Committee could be profitably directed at the present time.

MR. DE SOUZA.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he would lay papers on the Table of the House relative to the case of Mr. De Souza?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: There is very little correspondence which could be given, and, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, it would not be for the public advantage to re-open the question involved in it by publishing that correspondence. I shall be happy to show to the right hon. Gentleman the Papers which would be given, if he cares to see them; and he can then judge whether to move for them.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if, in connection with the delay alleged to have taken place in the delivery of Parliamentary Papers to the Members of the House, he is aware that while the Return, giving the rentals fixed by the Irish Land Commission in November and December last, was presented as a complete printed volume to the House on the 1st of April, it was not distributed to Members until the 3rd of May; whether he is aware that a similar Return, giving the rentals fixed in January and February, was presented, fully printed and bound, on the 9th of May, and that this Return has not yet been distributed; and, whether he can make arrangements by which these Returns will be put in the hands of Members without such long delays taking place?

*MR. JACKSON: The facts are as stated by the hon. Member. The second Return referred to will, I hope, be distributed on Saturday at latest. I am in communication with the different Departments with a view to preventing such delay in future.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to state where any information can be found showing the extent to which the recommendations of the Royal Irish Constabulary Committee of Inquiry, 1883, have been acted upon?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am endeavouring to collect the information the hon. Member desires, and I will see if it can be put into the form of a statement to be laid on the Table. If the hon. Gentleman will renew his question on Monday, by that time I shall have determined whether that course is practical or not.

SALE OF CORN BY WEIGHT OR MEASURE.

MR. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the very general agreement amongst farmers, millers, and corn merchants, that corn should be sold by weight and not by measure of capacity, he will grant a Select Committee to inquire into the subject next Session?

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: I believe there is a very general agreement that corn should be sold by weight among the classes referred to, but not an agreement as to what that weight should be. If my hon. Friend could, during the autumn, help to bring about an agreement on the latter point, it would tend very much to the success of the view he represents. I can make no promise with regard to next Session, but in all probability a Committee would be useful.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON COLONIZATION.

MR. RANKIN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board when he intends to move for the nomination of the Select Committee on Colonization?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): On Monday I hope to do so.

TEMPORARY NAVAL COMMAND.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he is aware that officers on being appointed to the command of Her Majesty's ships for temporary service, as, for instance, on the occasion of reviews and naval manœuvres, are put to considerable personal expense in fitting out, and whether, to meet this, some allowance can be made to them by way of compensation?

LORD G. HAMILTON: No information has reached me showing that officers in command are put to any considerable personal expense on being appointed to temporary command of Her Majesty's ships; nor can I see any reason why this should necessarily be so. No case has, in my judgment, been established that would warrant compensation being given.

FOREIGN MINISTERS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there is any precedent for an English Court investigating charges against the Foreign Minister of another Power; and what is the practice under International Law in dealing with Foreign Ministers accused under the law of another Power?

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: The Minister of a Foreign Power accredited to Her Majesty is not amenable to process of a British Court of Law. This is in accordance with a well recognized principle of International Law. I am not aware of any precedent to the contrary.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to answer the latter part of my question?

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: The practice is as I have stated that Foreign Ministers are not amenable to process of law in the country to which they are accredited.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Do I understand that to apply to Foreign Ministers accredited to the English Government?

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: It is the general principle of International Law. I am not aware of any precedent to the contrary.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask has any protest been received from the American Government against the investigation by an English Court of Law of charges made against the American Minister in Chili?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Not that I am aware of. I will make inquiry on the subject.

IRELAND—LAND COURT IN ANTRIM.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the Sub-Commissioners will hold a sitting in the County Antrim for the purpose of fixing fair rents; and whether he is aware that there are cases, entered since October, 1887, which have not yet been heard, and that the landlords in a part of the county are compelling the tenants to pay the full rent each half-year pending the hearing of the cases?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that a Sub-Commission has been sitting in the county Antrim continuously for the past eight months and will remain sitting during the summer, every endeavour being made to dispose of the cases outstanding. I am not aware that landlords are acting in the manner alleged in the second paragraph. But, as already pointed out, it is competent in such cases for the tenant to have the legal proceeding stayed pending the fixing of a fair rent, if, in the opinion of the Court, the circumstances justify it; or, should the tenant pay at the rate of old rent, statutable provision is made for an account between the parties for the rent accruing between the application and the fixing of the judicial rent.

POSTAL DELIVERIES IN DUBLIN.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether letters posted in Cork after 10 p.m. are not delivered in Dublin until 5.30 p.m. the

following evening, although they were until recently delivered in Dublin at 1 p.m.; whether this change was made by the Department in Dublin to save the trouble of sending a van or messenger from the General Post Office to meet the arrival of the Cork train at Kingsbridge Station; and whether, considering the convenience to the public afforded in the quick despatch of letters, he will direct the Department to revert to the arrangement of despatching a letter bag by the 6 a.m. train from Cork?

*MR. RAIKES: The correspondence to which the hon. Member refers was until lately delivered in Dublin at noon, and the change to a later hour was made in order to save an expense which was not regarded as justified by the small number of letters concerned. I will have inquiries made on the subject, and shall be glad if I find there is sufficient ground for restoring the former arrangement.

THE POLICE AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

MR. J. R. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the Superintendent of Police at Rye recently held an informal private inquiry into a complaint made by the parent of a child named Martin, attending an elementary school in that town, with reference to certain punishment alleged to have been administered to such child by Mr. Jenkins, the head master of the school; whether such superintendent subsequently sent a Report of the alleged facts to the secretary of the London Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): I am informed by the Chief Constable of Sussex that the Superintendent of Police at Rye did, on the receipt of a letter from the London Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, make inquiry as stated in the question and sent a Report to the society, stating that the boy Martin had been examined by a doctor who did not consider him to have been unduly punished. The superintendent in acting thus acted contrary to his printed instructions, with which the Chief Constable thinks he may have failed to make himself fully acquainted, as he had but lately been transferred to the force. The Chief Constable very much regrets the occurrence.

THE *CUMBERLAND* REFORMATORY SHIP.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he had read the Report of the trial in Sheriffs Court, Dumbarton, on 15th April, of certain boys named William Lewis, John Rankin, Jacob Napier, James M'Vey, and Daniel Cowan, who were charged with having, on the night of 17th February, set fire to the Reformatory Ship *Cumberland*, then moored in the Gareloch with 400 boys on board, whereby the said ship was destroyed; whether it is true that all the above boys admitted their guilt except Cowan, as certified by the evidence of the Commander, but that the jury gave, nevetheless, a verdict of "not proven" in respect of the four boys first named, and acquitted Cowan; why so serious a crime was not tried before a higher court; and, whether he will take steps to cause the removal of such boys as are alleged to have been concerned in the firing of the ship to a regular reformatory on shore, rather than continue to train them for the calling of a seaman, and thus save merchant vessels from receiving such lads as part complement?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON (Bute): I am acquainted with what took place at the trial of these boys. When questioned by the Commander all except Cowan admitted their guilt, but subsequently retracted this and denied that they were personally implicated. The jury no doubt considered that the admission was made more or less under pressure, and that on this evidence they could not find the charge proved. The case was sent to be tried by the Sheriff because it was represented that a long delay would be prejudicial to the discipline of the ship, and at that time delay would have been inevitable if the case had been tried before the High Court. The question of the removal of these boys falls to be dealt with by the Home Secretary, and I shall call his attention to the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Member. Meantime the boys have been sent away from the ship on license

under Section 27 of the Industrial Schools Act of 1866.

THE MILITARY AND THE CIVIL FORCES.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the authorities in any locality who are charged with the preservation of peace can requisition or call for the aid of the military, except in aid of and to support the civil force, and when the authorities are convinced that such force would prove insufficient to preserve the peace?

MR. MATTHEWS: The military ought not, in my opinion, to be requisitioned by the authorities responsible for the preservation of the peace, unless those authorities are satisfied that the civil force will be insufficient to keep the peace. The military act only in aid of and to support the civil force; and, except in cases of great and sudden emergency, there should be a requisition in writing of a magistrate.

THE DOURO WINE TRADE.

MR. HUNT (Marylebone, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Treaty of 1842 between England and Portugal is still in force; if so, whether some of the provisions of that treaty have lately been violated by the Portuguese Government subsidizing and granting privileges to a body of native wine-growers, and to others, detrimental to British traders in Portugal?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The treaty in question is still in force; but, so far as we know, its provisions do not appear to have been violated by any act of the Portuguese Government, inasmuch as a special right was reserved in that treaty to regulate the Douro wine trade.

DISHORNING OF CATTLE.

MR. W. CORBET (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Vice Chamberlain if his attention has been drawn to the Judgment delivered on Saturday last by Lord Coleridge and Mr. Justice Hawkins in the case of Ford *v.* Wiley, in which they held that

"The practice of dishorning cattle is a cruel, unreasonable, and unnecessary abuse of the animals operated upon, and therefore it is illegal and ought to be suppressed;"

whether he is aware that a different opinion has been held by judges in Ireland and Scotland; whether he has observed that Mr. Justice Hawkins in giving Judgment referred in illustration to the practice of cutting off the tails of horses, saying—

"Docking is another painful operation, which no doubt may occasionally be justified; but I hold a very strong opinion against allowing fashion or the whims of individuals to afford a justification for such painful mutilation;"

and whether in order to clear up any doubt that may exist, he will introduce a short Act declaring it illegal to dishorn cattle and dock horses.

THE VICE CHAMBERLAIN (Lord LEWISHAM, Lewisham):—The Judgment relating to dishorning of cattle having been only delivered on Saturday last, it would be impossible for any Department to have decided whether any fresh legislation is necessary on the subject. Even if this should be found to be the case, it would probably be considered as an Amendment to the Cruelty to Animals Acts, which are not within the province of the Agricultural Department.

SOLDIERS' UNCLAIMED BALANCES.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what is the present amount of soldiers' unclaimed balances, and how much of it has accumulated since the year 1863; whether the names of soldiers who have died in the service of the State, leaving money for their next of kin, have hitherto been published only in the *London Gazette* and the *Army List*; and, whether they can in future be published in newspapers more frequently read by the class of persons interested than the *London Gazette* can be supposed to be?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Perhaps my hon. Friend will allow me to answer, the Secretary for War having been called away. The total amount of soldiers' unclaimed balances since 1863 is £126,123; of which sum £77,826 has been paid over to the Royal Patriotic Fund, under Section 18 of the Regimental Debts Act, for the purpose of enabling the Commissioners to grant pensions to the widows and orphans of non-commissioned officers and men. With regard to the publication of the lists of balances unclaimed in publications other than the *London Gazette*, I would refer

the hon. Member to a reply made by one of my predecessors on the 22nd of May, 1879. Very little practical result was found to be brought about by advertising in newspapers; and at present the lists are exposed at the headquarters of Regimental Districts, besides being inserted in the *London Gazette* and the monthly *Army List*.

SCREW PROPELLERS—THE *CALLIOPE*.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the statements in the *Engineer* that, in the cases of vessels in which steel screw propellers had been exchanged for those of manganese bronze, an increase of speed of as much as a knot, in some instances, had resulted; and whether the safety of the *Calliope* was largely due to her being able to steam at the rate of half a knot, against terrific wind and sea, when other vessels were blown ashore?

LORD G. HAMILTON: The Admiralty practice is to make the propellers of Her Majesty's ships of gun-metal, not of steel, and it is not considered that any advantage in speed would be realized by the substitution of manganese bronze. It is the case that the *Calliope* was only able to make about half a knot when proceeding to sea in the late hurricane at Samoa. The screw propellor of the *Calliope* is of manganese bronze, and there are five other ships in the Navy fitted with propellers of this material.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I would ask whether the Admiralty have considered it desirable to make any recognition of the gallant conduct of the captain and crew of the *Calliope* which saved the ship on the occasion?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I hope to lay on the Table a Report of the circumstances, and, if possible, some recognition may be made of the conduct of those engaged in the act. But the captain himself is an officer of considerable distinction, and it would not be possible specially to recognize his services.

SUNDAY LABOUR IN THE POST OFFICE.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he was aware that the postmaster of Liverpool has issued a notice proposing to extend, from 1st June, the hours of labour of the letter carriers and others on Sunday by an additional collection of letters at 9 p.m.; whether this will increase by several hours the Sunday labour of these men; whether their work on Sunday begins before 5 a.m. and will end after 9 p.m.; whether it is proposed to increase the pay of the Post Office *employés* whose Sunday labour is so extended; whether a similar extension or any extension of Sunday labour is contemplated or has been arranged in any other postal districts; and if he will state to the House the reason for the extension at Liverpool?

*MR. RAIKES: A Sunday night collection at 10.15 to 10.30 p.m. is now made in various parts of Liverpool, and it is proposed, in order to give all parts of the city equal facilities, to abolish this restricted collection, and to substitute for it a general collection at 9 o'clock. The restricted collection has been hitherto performed as extra duty by postmen who receive extra payment for it. The ordinary morning duty on Sunday extends from 5.30 a.m. to about 9.30 a.m., and the extra duty will occupy about two hours additional in the evening, and will be completed more than one hour earlier than heretofore. A similar arrangement must be continued temporarily as regards the additional men employed upon the new work until it can be ascertained precisely what is the permanent provision needed for the duty. This will, however, be done in the course of a week or two, and care will then be taken to arrange that none of the men employed upon the Sunday evening collections shall have any previous duty upon the same day, but each postman shall perform one duty only on Sunday. This will be in strict accordance with the general practice of the Department. The arrangement under which the Liverpool postmen are wholly relieved from duty on every other Sunday will, of course, not be in any way affected.

THE CROFTER COMMISSION.

MR. BERNARD COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the fact that on 11th May the Crofter Commissioners

gave their decision in the cases from the Macdonald estates in the South of Skye, and gave the following reductions: to 247 tenants an average reduction of 32 per cent was given, whilst 64 per cent of their arrears was wiped off; whether the arrears amounted to £2,227, and of that amount the Commissioners wiped off £1,405; whether it is the fact that since then the Crofter Commissioners have issued their decisions in the cases of the Glendale tenants in the west of Skye, and gave the following reductions: the rents were reduced 36 per cent and about 70 per cent of their arrears was cancelled; whether the arrears amounted to 4,047, and of that amount the Commissioners cancelled £3,113; and, whether the Government are prepared to take measures to assimilate the position of the tenants in Ireland to that of the Scotch crofters?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Member desires specific information on the action of the Crofter Commission he should address his question to the Lord Advocate. There appears to be no essential distinction in the matter referred to between the position of Irish tenants and Scotch crofters. In the case of both these classes the inauguration of the system of fixing rents by a Land Court was accompanied by a method of dealing with existing arrears. In the case of neither class was it intended by the Legislature that arrears accruing on the rents so fixed should be periodically expunged.

IRELAND—THE CHARGE AGAINST FATHER M'FADDEN.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state on what charge Father M'Fadden is to be tried?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is contrary to practice to state to the House the charges on which the Attorney General for Ireland intends to arraign persons returned for trial by the Magistrates. The Attorney General will in due time inform Father M'Fadden and his co-traversers who are on bail of the charges on which they will be tried.

MR. SEXTON: Considering the importance of the case, in the interests of the defence will the right hon. Gentleman say now or on a future day what will be the extent of notice given by the Attorney General?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I gather from the reports which reach me that information may be given in the course of the next week or 10 days.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As to the 20 unbailed prisoners, is it intended to try them for misdemeanour so as only to allow them 6 challenges in empannelling the jury instead of the 20 they would have under other circumstances?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot answer the question.

MR. MACDONALD: Will the prisoners be tried at Maryborough?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman did not ask me that question, nor did I give him the information. He asked me the other day as to Queen's County and I told him the case would be tried there.

MAIL BAGS IN QUEEN'S COUNTY.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD: I wish to ask the Postmaster General whether it is true that, on the morning of the 17th May, the mail bag which should have been delivered at Borris-in-Ossory, Queen's County, was brought on to Birr, a distance of 17 miles, while the mail bag for Birr was left instead at Borris-in-Ossory, whereby serious inconvenience was caused to the inhabitants of both towns; whether it was the duty of the postmaster at Borris to examine the bags and satisfy himself that the driver of the mail car had delivered the right one; and whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the matter?

*MR. RAIKES: I have not received any report of the irregularity to which the hon. Member refers, but I will have inquiry made with regard to it.

THE CASE OF MARY SWEENY.

MR. JORDAN (Clare, W.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the case of Mary Sweeny, of Doonagore, Doolin, county Clare, a widow with five children, who was imprisoned in Limerick Gaol on the 9th of January last at the instance of Mr. Kelly, County Court Judge at Ennis, and whose tenancy in her holding has been determined since her imprisonment, and she made a caretaker; is he aware that an application has been made to Judge Kelly to liberate her, she pro-

posing to give solvent security to appear before him when and where he might require, but has been refused; and if, considering all the circumstances of the case, and the length of her imprisonment, he will advise that she be liberated?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not had sufficient notice of the question, and have been unable to obtain the necessary information.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT—THE BARROW COLLIERIES.

MR. PICKARD (York, W.R., Normanton): I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in consequence of the Letter signed by 11 of the jurymen, which contains the following passage:—

"Mr. Thomas Taylor and Mr. Levi Dyson, who appeared as the representative of the Barrow Collieries, do hereby state that the Coroner, Mr. Thomas Taylor, did refuse to allow Mr. Dyson to attend the said inquest for upwards of 20 minutes, although Mr. Dyson made two or three applications to do so. We also wish to state that, on Mr. Dyson asking the Coroner if he would allow him to ask a few questions, the Coroner said, 'No, he would not allow him to ask anything,'"—

he is willing to make a further statement to the House with regard to the duties prescribed to the Coroner by the 48th Section of "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887," and what steps he proposes to take in this important matter?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have nothing to add to the answer I gave on the 19th. The power to attend at an inquest and ask questions is subject to the order of the Coroner. I cannot interfere except by expressing the opinion that the Coroner should allow representatives of workmen present to ask any proper questions.

MR. PICKARD: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the Coroner refused that in this case?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am aware that certain persons have said so, but as I said a few days ago, the Coroner denies it absolutely.

FOREIGN BOUNTIES ON WINES.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs whether there is any truth in the report that the Portuguese Government has brought in a Bill granting a premium on the export of wine to the extent of 15 to 30 per cent in the value; and whether the Government has considered the effect such a bounty might have on the duties on temperance drinks, spirituous liquors, home-made wines and beer in this country?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Her Majesty's Minister at Lisbon has reported by telegraph that a premium of this nature is to be granted in favour of ordinary wine. We must wait the course of post for further particulars, and my hon. Friend will see that the effect of such a measure upon the public revenue cannot be immediately considered.

THE SUBMARINE CABLE PURCHASE.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he can state what proportion of the £154,000 received last year from telegraphic messages sent through the Submarine Telegraph Company represented profit to the Government; and what were the receipts of the Post Office from telegraphic messages sent to other parts of the Continent effected by the proposed alteration of tariff?

*MR. RAIKES: I regret that it is not possible to state what portion of the sum of about £154,000 received by the Post Office last year from messages passing through the hands of the Submarine Telegraph Company represents profit. The cost of dealing with these messages is inextricably mixed with the cost of dealing with inland messages; the same offices, the same wires, and the same telegraphists being employed on both. What I sought to explain was that if the Post Office formerly received about £154,000 in a year, and were to receive in future about £222,000, the increase of gross revenue would be about £68,000, and that if the estimated additional annual expenses of about £50,000 were deducted from this sum, the net additional revenue would be about £18,000, or, as I described it, from £15,000 to £20,000. As to the latter part of the right hon. Gentleman's question, I may say that no alteration has been made in the tariff of messages to other countries than Germany, Holland, and France. The sum of about £154,000 represents the whole receipts of the Post Office derived last year from messages passing over

the cables which connect England with those three countries and with Belgium.

AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS FROM THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

MR. H. FARQUHARSON (Dorset, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government of the Argentine Republic give bounties on the exports of agricultural products which are largely imported into this country; and whether Her Majesty's Government will make representations to the Government of the Argentine Republic on the matter?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The fact is as stated. Papers on the subject will be presented to Parliament with the Reports received from abroad in answer to the address of the House of Commons of the 16th ult. relative to bounties.

WESTMINSTER HALL.

MR. TOMLINSON (for Colonel LAURIE): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he can see his way to relax the rule by which a visitor, when accompanied by a Member, is unable to pass through Westminster Hall during the sittings of the House?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. D. R. PLUNKETT, Dublin University): I am advised by the Secretary of State for the Home Department that, in view of the opinion expressed by the Commissioner of Police upon the subject, he does not feel justified in assenting to any further relaxation of the rules for the admission of visitors to Westminster Hall.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: May I ask whether the Home Secretary can state what danger to Westminster Hall prevented me—a Member of Parliament—taking my boy who has left school through Westminster Hall?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no doubt the right hon. Gentleman's boy would be a perfectly innocent and harmless visitor; at the same time, I think any relaxation of the rule would lead to inconvenience, and at any rate I must decline to take the responsibility.

GOVERNMENT DOCKYARDS—DISCHARGE OF WORKMEN.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I bek to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is a fact that 15 shipwrights in the Devonport Dockyard are under notice of discharge for next Saturday, and that some 150 more men are to be discharged at the rate of 15 a week during the next 10 weeks; why this is being done after the positive assurances to the contrary recently given; are these men drawn principally from the Chief Constructor's Department; what is the reason of these discharges from this Department at a moment when millions are being voted by Parliament for fresh shipbuilding; and, whether it is the case that the leading officials of the yard have exerted themselves to prevent these discharges?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Eleven shipwrights are under notice to leave Devonport Dockyard on Saturday next; eight more will receive notice to leave on June 1, and eight more on June 8. Further small discharges may be necessary from time to time for the purpose of keeping expenditure within the Vote assigned—by adjusting the trades—as the new programme will require more labourers and fewer shipwrights as the work progresses. Every endeavour has been made, and will be made, to keep down to the lowest point any discharges that may be necessary, but no guarantee has been given that no discharges should take place under any circumstances. The men are drawn principally from the Constructor's Department. In reply to the last question, the responsibility for all changes in Dockyard establishments rests on the Admiralty alone, and I am not prepared on such questions to give the opinion of the local officers.

LABOUR CONFERENCE AT BERNE.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if, in consideration of the general desire of the working classes, he can now state that this country will be represented at the International Labour Conference in Switzerland?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The matter of the International Labour Conference at Berne is still under consideration, but the decision of Her Majesty's Government with regard to it will soon be announced.

PERPETUAL PENSIONS.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what provision will be made in the commutation of perpetual pensions or allowances to safeguard the rights of the successors of the present holders; and whether due precaution to this effect have hitherto been taken in all cases, or whether in any cases the present holder has received the lump sum representing the value of the pension without adequate conditions as to its future appropriation?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The Treasury, before commuting any perpetual pensions or allowance, will lay a Minute before the House of Commons, and the House can then satisfy itself that proper precautions have been taken to safeguard the rights of successors. The Act (36 and 37 Vic., c. 57), which empowers the Treasury to contract for the redemption of any permanent annuity charged on the Consolidated Fund or the Votes, provides that, where the person to whom the annuity is for the time being payable is a limited owner (other than an ecclesiastical corporation), the consent of the Court of Chancery to the contract must first be obtained, and that when so assented to it shall be binding on the heirs, successors, &c., of such limited owner and all other persons interested in the annuity. Since 1873, when that Act was passed, this provision has been duly observed under legal advice, and in all cases of redemption previously effected similar precautions have been taken where limited ownership was involved to safeguard the interests of the successors. In one or two instances Parliament provided a special trustee.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF POLICE.

MR. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, East): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can now state whether the Report of the Commissioners of Police of the Metropolis for the year 1888 will be laid upon the Table of the House before the Vote in Supply for the Metropolitan Police is taken?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed that the Report is in a forward state, but I cannot promise that it will be laid before the House before the Vote in Supply.

MR. ROWLANDS: If this Report is not ready when the Police Vote comes on, I shall move the rejection of the Vote.

CONVERSION OF EGYPTIAN BONDS.

MR. ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the assent of the Powers who signed the Decree of 1876, also the law of liquidation of 1880, must be unanimous before the conversion of the Egyptian Railway Five per Cent Bonds into Four per Cent Bonds can take place; if not, how many are necessary?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It is possible that the assumption involved in the question of my hon. Friend may be correct; but I am sure he will understand me when I say that I do not feel able to give an opinion which would have any legal value on the terms of an international agreement.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will suggest to his colleagues who may be absent during question time that they should communicate to hon. Members in writing their replies to the questions put in their absence?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The suggestion contained in the question of the hon. Member deserves serious consideration on the part of the House. I understand the hon. Member to suggest that many questions are put in this House which could be answered in a more satisfactory and complete manner by a letter from the head of the Department concerned. I hope I may suggest that the hon. Member and other hon. Members should take that course in future. I believe such a course would act very greatly to the advantage of the House and the public. I may point out to the hon. Member that Members having questions on the Paper are more frequently absent when called upon by the Speaker than Ministers. I and my hon. Friends are always most anxious to give hon. Members every information we can consistently with their duty.

MR. CONYBEARE: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for the ingenuity of his reply, but I wish to guard myself

against the supposition that my question was directed to anything of the kind the right hon. Gentleman so elaborately states in his answer.

SCOTCH LOCAL RATES.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the payment of local rates in towns during the winter months is felt as a considerable hardship among the poorer ratepayers of the wage-earning class, such as masons and others, whose employment is dependent on the season, and who are often out of work for a considerable time during winter; and whether he will consider whether steps can be taken, by legislation or otherwise, whereby rates may be levied during the summer at a time when employment is more steady and payment could be more easily made?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I am not aware of the existence of any such feeling of hardship as is mentioned in the question. The Police Act of 1862 empowers the Commissioners to fix a day when the rates are to be paid, and they are therefore at liberty to select, and no doubt do select, a day which, in their opinion, is most convenient for the ratepayers. The same provision was inserted in the Burgh and Police Bill of last Session, and no representation was then made that any hardship existed.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC RATES.

SIR B. SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether Urban and Rural Sanitary Authorities lodging and supporting objections before the Board of Trade to the proposed new classification and schedules of railway companies in conformity with Section 24 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of last Session may defray the expenses incurred thereby out of the rates from which expenses incurred by such authorities in the execution of their ordinary duties were defrayed, or whether this facility applies only to complaints under Section 31 of the same Act?

*MR. RITCHIE: I think that it is by no means clear that Sanitary Authorities have any such general power as is suggested of charging their district with the expenses in question; but, of course, in the event of any such expenditure being incurred and disallowed, the Local Government Board would, on an appeal to them against the auditor's decision, fully and carefully consider the facts of the particular case which, in the opinion of the Local Authority, justified the expenditure.

COMMITTEE ON WOODS AND FORESTS.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he intends to proceed to-night with the Motion for the appointment of the Committee on the Administration of the Woods and Forests?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Member is aware of the method of striking Committees, and if the Committee is formed with due regard to all the interests represented, I hope it will be accepted as satisfactory.

MR. BUCHANAN: If the Motion is proceeded with to-night, I shall be obliged to oppose it.

DR. CAMERON: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman to postpone the Motion respecting the appointment of the Woods and Forests Select Committee for another reason. It is now much later (5.55) than it was expected we should enter on the consideration of the Scotch Local Government Bill, and in consideration of that fact, and also of the fact that the proposition relates to a purely Scotch matter, I think the right hon. Gentleman might reasonably consent to the postponement of the debate, which, if initiated, must continue for some time.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I will agree to let the Motion stand over until to-morrow.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): The Report on the Foreign Office Vote has long been postponed, and there are several subjects which it is desired to discuss. I hope the Vote will be brought on as soon as possible after the Second Reading of the Scotch Bills.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I will endeavour to make some arrangement after the Second Reading of the Scotch Bills. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the Bill, but there are three Bills. The first and second Bills are practically one.

I think it will be convenient to the House if these Bills are first disposed of. I will communicate with the right hon. Gentleman on the subject of the Foreign Office Vote.

THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS: Mr. Speaker, I wish with your permission, Sir, to call your attention to a matter affecting the accuracy of the records of the proceedings in this House. On Tuesday evening last, just at the close of the Committee of Supply, the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge) rose in his place and claimed to move "that the question be now put." The right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees withheld his assent to that Motion, but I find no record whatever of the circumstance in the Votes distributed yesterday morning. I venture to remind you, Sir, that on the 12th of March last I called your attention to a similar matter which occurred on the 11th of March, also in Committee of Supply, and that you then, after investigation, gave it as your opinion that the Votes should be corrected in that respect. I wish now to ask you respectfully whether it is not proper and necessary for the accuracy of the records of our proceedings that some reference to the circumstance I refer to should appear on the Votes.

*MR. SPEAKER: It is quite right there should be an accurate record of the proceedings, but I am not cognizant of what happened in Committee of the House. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees will detail the circumstances under which the omission, if there be an omission, has occurred.

MR. COURTNEY: I came down to the House yesterday before the Votes were delivered, and did not receive mine until to-day. On looking at the Votes to-day I find there is no reference to the incident which the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division refers to. The circumstances are these: At ten minutes to seven, or rather later, because the Committee was dividing at that time, the Vote was put. There appeared to be a disposition to continue the discussion, indeed one Member rose in his place. I was leaving the Chair when the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge) moved that the question be now put. Whether the hon. Member made the Motion before I left the Chair is perhaps a matter of doubt, but if he did I disregarded it. I am clearly of opinion that, as far as the main object of the hon. Member for Rushcliffe is concerned, there should be a record of all cases of Motions of this kind, and the only point in doubt is whether the Motion was made before I left the Chair or afterwards.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS: I watched the proceedings very narrowly, and though it would be obviously improper to enter into argument with the right hon. Gentleman, I am sure the Chairman had not left the Chair.

IRELAND—THE FALCARRAGH EVICTIONS.

MR. CONYBEARE: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland a question with regard to a telegram I have received to-day from Falcarragh to the effect that evictions are to commence there to-morrow? I should like to know whether he has received any information on the subject; whether, in such a case as the present the battering ram is to be employed; and, whether it is true, as reported in the newspapers yesterday, that the Government have refused the assistance of the police to Mr. Olphert, except in some eight or nine cases; whether such "pressure within the law" has been adopted because Donegal is in a state of revolution?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the first part of the hon. Gentleman's question, I have no information; and with regard to the last part, my answer is in the negative.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen): I desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a question of which I have given him private notice. It is whether he intends to proceed with the four Scotch Local Government Bills before asking for the Second Reading of the Scotch Universities Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I will reserve the decision on the question until a later stage of the debate, which is now about to be initiated.

NEW WRIT.

For the County of Cork, in the room of John Hooper, esquire, Manor of Northstead.

EAST INDIA (UNCOVENANTED SERVICE).

Address for—

"Return showing the number of Pensioners, retired members of the Uncovenanted Service of India, whose pensions were paid in England prior to the year 1864, the names of Pensioners so paid, and the Presidencies to which they belonged."—(*Mr King.*)

SALMON FISHING (SCOTLAND).

Return ordered—

"(1) Giving each case where a right of Salmon Fishing in the sea off the coast of Scotland is held under a lease from the Crown, showing the original date and rent at which a lease of such right was first given by the Commissioners of Woods, and the present rent paid in each case, and stating the distance to sea to which rights under such leases are expressed to extend; (2) giving each case where a right of Salmon Fishing in the sea off the coast of Scotland has been sold by the Crown, with the sums paid in respect of each such sale since the transference of the management or the Crown rights in Scottish Salmon Fisheries to the Office of Woods and Forests, and stating the distance to sea to which rights so sold are stated to extend."—(*Mr. Marjoribanks.*)

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (RETURNING OFFICERS' EXPENSES) BILL. (No. 55.)

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday [5th June], read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

MOTIONS.

—o—

MERCHANT SHIPPING (PILOTAGE).

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Bill to amend the Law relating to Pilotage, ordered to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks Beach and Sir John Gorst.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 243.]

POST OFFICE SITES.

On Motion of Mr. Postmaster General, Bill to authorize the transfer of the site of the Coldbath Fields Prison, in the county of Middlesex, to Her Majesty's Postmaster General; and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Raikes and Mr. Jackson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 244.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL. (No. 187.)

Order for Second Reading, read.

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, Burghs): Mr. Speaker, in the course of the short debate which occurred on the introduction of this measure, there was addressed from all quarters of the House to the Lord Advocate, who was then the spokesman of the Government, a general expression of congratulation. The reason of that prevailing feeling I believe to have been that we were ready to recognize in the general scope and scheme of this measure, and the cognate measures, a desire on the part of Her Majesty's Government to deal with this great question in a broad, impartial, and, to a certain extent, in a bold spirit. And for my part, now that we have had several weeks in which to consider in greater detail, and at our leisure, the nature of the Government's proposals, I am not ready either to withdraw or to modify any of the laudatory phrases I used. Blemishes there are in these Bills, and omissions and mistakes, some of them of a very grave nature; and it will be our duty to point this out and to do our best to amend them. But this I can promise Her Majesty's Government on the part of those with whom I am associated, that there is not the slightest desire amongst us to make what is called Party capital out of this great subject. On the contrary, we will spare no pains to assist the Government in perfecting their scheme of Local Government for Scotland, so as to make it answer as fully as may be the desires and requirements of the Scottish people. But I cannot refrain from alluding to a speech delivered at Millport in the course of the Easter holidays by the Lord Advocate. It seemed to me to be an unfortunate speech. The right hon. Gentleman was addressing his own constituents, and finding himself on his own familiar vantage ground, he crowed somewhat loudly. He was unsparing in his praises of his own legislative offspring. It is not unusual for a mother to fall into an ecstacy of adoration in the contemplation of her babe, but she

usually selects for the assumption of that attitude the privacy of her own chamber. And the Lord Advocate must have forgotten that in these days the eye, and what is more important the ear, of public opinion is able to penetrate even to the island of Cumbrae. But he not only emulated the mother in her exaggerated admiration of her own child; he copied her also in her maternal solicitude for its safety. The air, according to the Lord Advocate, was full of danger to his measure. He had heard rumours of obstruction coming from this part of the House, and with great gallantry he assured his constituents that with the resources at his disposal he should be able to cope with obstruction.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): I do not wish the right hon. Gentleman to fall into an inaccuracy. I said that I had heard such rumours as he indicated, but I proceeded to say that I disbelieved them.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am glad to hear that he disbelieved them, but he certainly mentioned, by way of fortifying himself in the disbelief, that with the resources of public feeling at his disposal—that was the expression he used — he should be able to overcome obstruction. I must have read an inaccurate report of his remarks, but I saw the words which I have stated. But, taking it altogether, I was disappointed with the speech, because it is not, as it seems to me, by a tone such as this, or by language such as I have, at all events, seen imputed to the learned Lord, that the ways of business are smoothed, or that the Government will conciliate the loyal co-operation which from the first we have offered in this matter. However this may be, we are anxious at least that the first two Bills of this group should pass, and pass in such an amended form as to bestow a real benefit on the local interests of Scotland. It will be our endeavour by the free expression of our opinions—opinions which, we believe, are shared by the great majority of our countrymen—to give the Government such encouragement as may induce them to carry, to a much greater extent than they have at the outset ventured upon, the essential principles which lie at the basis of this whole proposal. The truth is, as far as the governing bodies of the counties are concerned, unless we carry the principles of the first Bill and the reform of local administration further than is proposed, it was hardly worth while to meddle with it at all. County management in Scotland is already largely in the hands of those who have to bear the burdens. And here is the difference between England and Scotland. I think it most desirable on this occasion to dwell upon the point, although it may be familiar to many hon. Members. Until recently, in England there was not a shred of representation in county government; but in Scotland, for a long period, and in a definite shape since 1856, the Commissioners of Supply are actually the men who pay the rate. Every proprietor of land, to the annual value of £100 a year, may claim to be enrolled a Commissioner of Supply; or if his property is in houses, to the value of £200 a year. And these constitute the body which controls the business of the county. There is, no doubt, a tangible grievance on the part of owners of property which comes under the £100 line. But speaking generally, the House will recognize at once the material difference between the position in Scotch counties and the position in English. We, therefore, start with a very long advantage over England. I mention this most elementary fact, not in order to inform the House of that which it already knows, but in order to argue from it that we must maintain this advantage that we already possess, and to protest in the strongest terms against the English Act of last year being taken in any way as a guide or standard of what is required in Scotland. But there is a further and wider reason for what I say. I maintain that a larger scheme is demanded by the genius of the Scottish people. For long years we have been accustomed to democratic forms in Scotland, and impatient of any superimposed authority which does not rest on the popular will. This fact enters deeply into the feeling of the Scottish people; and I do not hesitate to ascribe their familiarity with, and their belief in, and their fondness for, democratic ideals mainly to their traditional form of Church government. In former days it was questions of ecclesiastical rather than of civil policy

and government that attracted the interest of the Scotch people, and although this is now greatly changed, yet the Presbyterian spirit has extended to their political views, and this spirit has permeated the community quite outside the pale of the three Presbyterian Churches, so that many a man who does not range himself among their followers is yet influenced, perhaps unconsciously, by their form of government. Let the House for a moment consider how complete is the analogy which the Presbyterian system of Church government affords to the graduated system of local government now generally approved. You have the Kirk Session dealing with all affairs of the parish, just as you have the Parochial Board. You have the Presbytery for the district, answering to the District Council. You have the Synod for the county, or union of counties, corresponding with the County Council, and above that, beyond them all, you have the General Assembly, which meets once a year to control the affairs of the whole Church throughout the country, and which may be taken as an analogue to the possible realization of a legislative assembly dealing with the affairs of Scotland. That, however, is beyond our limit just now, but I think I have said enough to make it clear that it is right to protest against finding any analogy in the Act which was passed last year for England. I believe that the Government itself will agree in this. It was not unnatural that in drafting these Bills they should have regard to the precedent of last year; but the House is free to amend them without regard to that precedent; and in respect of this matter, I would especially make an appeal to English Members, who are the arbiters of our fate. They may not listen to our discussions but by their votes in divisions they determine the points of difference among us. I would ask them therefore to endeavour to deal with the questions submitted to them from a Scotch rather than from an English point of view, and especially with regard to the first of these two Bills, which is the principal one. The whole scheme of the Government is embraced in four Bills, which stand as regards the interest and probable influence and power of the House, in a sort of diminuendo scale. The first Bill, which contains the larger provision for the framework of County Government, is wholly reserved for the consideration of the Committee of the whole House. Here it is that I claim tender treatment at the hands of English Members. The second Bill, which embodies subsidiary details, we are told, it is the intention of the Government to refer to a Committee, somewhat strengthened by the presence of Scotch Members. The idea, I presume, is that this Bill may be thrown to the wolves, in order to save the life of, or mitigate the attack upon, its elder sister. I think it right at once to say that that would be most unsatisfactory to Scotch Members. We should be glad to have any of these Bills referred to a Scotch Committee composed of the Scotch representatives, but we are not at all willing that the details of any of these Bills should be settled in a Committee largely, or even principally, composed of English Members. We would prefer the publicity of the Committee of the whole House. With regard to the third Bill, dealing with Parochial Boards, I was rather surprised at the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman that that Bill should be considered together with the others, on condition of the Second Reading being unopposed. We have been informed from the Chair — and Mr. Speaker's authority was not really required to convince us—that we cannot, according to the rules of debate, take the Parochial Boards Bill in combination with the other two. The right hon. Gentleman is totally mistaken if he thinks that by any management of that sort he will easily obtain the Second Reading of the Parochial Boards Bill, which we regard as totally unsatisfactory. The opposition to it will be strenuous and prolonged, and I trust that the Government will not in any way imperil or delay the first two Bills by mixing them up unnecessarily with the Parochial Boards Bill. Last of all, there is a Bill dealing with Private Bill legislation, which is associated with the others, though why I do not know; but I need not go into it now, as in all probability we shall hear nothing more of it this Session. And now I must interpolate an affectionate inquiry as to the position of another measure—an old and familiar friend.

Here are four Bills, but where is the fifth? Where is the Burgh Police and Health Bill? That Bill has already had a singular and chequered career. It has been three times introduced in the House of Commons by successive Governments and twice in the House of Lords; it has been twice mentioned in Her Majesty's gracious Speech from the Throne; it has been twice considered by a Select Committee of the House of Commons, and once by a Select Committee of the House of Lords; it has been once read a third time in the House of Commons, and twice read a third time in the House of Lords. Last year it was introduced, as usual, and a number of my colleagues, willing martyrs to the cause, panted over its provisions through the heats of last summer. When business came into a tight strait in August last, the Scotch Members were invited to meet in the Scotch Office, to determine the particular business that should be proceeded with, and there was then a general feeling in favour of the Burgh Police and Health Bill being pushed forward. The Lord Advocate of the time, speaking in the presence of the Scotch Secretary, gave a strong and excellent reason for proceeding with it. He said, "It is above all things expedient to get it out of the way before we deal with Local Government in Scotland." Weeks and months went on, and still no progress was made with this Bill, and on the 15th November it was withdrawn. And what did the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury say when he withdrew the measure? He said:—

> "The Government are under the impression that it would be better to deal with it in connection with the Local Government Bill for Scotland, which they intend to introduce early next Session."

Now, I cannot believe both, but I am willing to accept and believe either of these alternative views. Unfortunately, however, we are now in the position that neither of them has been realized. We are here considering this great question of Local Government and have neither got the Burgh Police and Health Bill put out of the way, nor incorporated in the measure before the House. Therefore, I content myself with making a plaintive inquiry as to the fate and position of that measure. Now, Sir, I have said that the mind and genius of Scotland are favourable to a large reform of Local Government, wide in its basis and strong in its foundation. But this is not the only object on which the mind of Scotland is set. The second object is to simplify and concentrate the powers of local bodies—and here I speak not only of the larger County Authorities, but of the Parochial Boards and the School Boards. There is a strong and prevalent opinion in Scotland that we have too many of these bodies; that there is a needless multiplication of elections and officials, and, therefore, a needless increase of expense, and there is a strong feeling also that if these bodies were consolidated the work would be better done and the bodies themselves would be more dignified and raised in importance, in which case it is probable that better men would be induced to serve upon them. Now, I do not say that in every respect all their functions could be combined, and still less do I say that consolidation should be effected at once; but I strongly hold the opinion that we should look in this direction, and that the new frame-work should be made to fit and suit as closely as possible such a prospective change. Well, Mr. Speaker, if I were frankly and plainly to express the practical effect of all I have been saying as to the state of feeling in Scotland, it would come to this: that in my opinion we should seek to set up all over the country the same form and degree of municipal government which prevails in the large towns. For my own part, I would make no reservation in the matter. I would give confidently and ungrudgingly to the inhabitants of the counties the same complete control over all their local affairs that is possessed with such good results by their neighbours in the towns; and I am satisfied that whether this is done at once, or whether it comes piece by piece, nothing short of it will satisfy their just claims, or ensure harmony, efficiency, and stability in local administration. Now, Sir, having thus stated broadly but distinctly my ideal—and I think my feeling is shared by many of my hon. Friends around me—I will proceed to a consideration of the detailed provisions of these Bills. I am afraid that what I have to say will be mostly made up of criticism and objection; but I hope the Government will understand that I do not wish to occupy the time

of the House in empty expressions of agreement where I think they have gone in the right direction. The first point which meets us is the constitution of the new body for the government of the counties; and with regard to that the first question we have to ask is, who are to be the electors? Now, the Government propose that the electors should be practically those on the municipal register, plus Peers. Well, Peers are—to use language familiar in the days of my youth—a negligible quantity; they do not amount to very much in the way of addition to the register. But the real *crux* of the question lies in the service franchise. The Government propose that there should be for this purpose no service franchise of the ordinary kind; but that anyone entitled to enjoy the service franchise may claim to vote for the county if he will qualify himself by paying his share of the county assessment. This is based on a maxim which, I think, has been misunderstood—the maxim that representation and taxation should go together. That maxim has, no doubt, done good service in the past, but I have always understood it to mean that no man should be taxed who is not represented, but not that no man should be represented unless he is taxed. And if the House will consider the position of the Scotch farm servant or ploughman who will constitute the bulk of those who will come in under the service franchise, it will be seen that he is already taxed; because, if he does not pay his contribution to the taxation of the country directly, he pays it indirectly. It may be difficult to analyze this, or bring it precisely to book, or put one's finger on the precise moment in which he pays, but there is no question about it that he not only has as much interest in the good government of the locality in which he lives as anyone, whether paying rates or not, but that he does contribute, in one way or another, to the cost of the Government. Therefore, we shall make a strong endeavour, which I hope will not be resisted with any great obstinacy, to introduce these service franchise-men into the new constituency. And it will then come to this, that the electors will be Parliamentary electors, plus women. Even the opponents of giving the Parliamentary franchise to women admit that they may properly have votes in local affairs. They have votes for School Boards, and they also have votes for Town Councils, and they certainly ought to possess the same privilege in regard to county matters. But I wish to pass a little criticism on a phrase used in the clause which confers the female franchise. The clause says:—

> "Every woman who is not married and living in family with her husband, otherwise possessing the qualification for being registered as a Parliamentary elector, but who is disqualified for being so registered by reason of being a woman, shall, nevertheless, be entitled to be registered as a county elector."

I do not know whether these words—"not married and living in family with her husband"—are borrowed from some other Act or Bill, but they do not appear to me to be very happy. Of course, a woman who is not married would not have a husband to live with, but the meaning may be a "woman who is not married, or who being married is not living with her husband." But whatever the meaning, I object to it altogether. I object to the exclusion of married women from the exercise of this privilege. Why should a married woman be shut out from enjoying it, while those who have failed to change their condition in life, or, still less, a married woman who is unfortuaate enough to be living away from her husband, is to be preferred? I hope that when we come to that part of the Bill in Committee we shall be able to make some improvement in it. On this subject there is one clause as to the mode of election and the qualifications of those elected which a good many of us will regard with a considerable degree of satisfaction. It is Clause 7, of the Second Bill, which says that—

> "No person shall be entitled to give more than one vote, or vote for more than one candidate at one election of the County Council."

I need hardly say that many of us wish to see that provision extended to Parliamentary elections; and I think it will be difficult for the Government, or for any one assenting to this proposal, to refuse to extend it to Parliamentary elections, because it is puzzling to us to see why, if it be right in respect to a county election, that a person who is interested and has property in, say, six divisions of a county, should only have one vote at the election of a County Council, yet at the same time, in respect of a Parlia-

mentary election, a man who has a property interest in six counties has six Parliamentary votes. [A VOICE: "In six different counties?"] Exactly so; in six counties. The right hon. Gentleman's experience makes it clear. If he has property in six different counties he has six different votes in county elections on account of his six different interests; but that is because those county interests are altogether separate and distinct. According to this legislation, a man will be entitled to make his voice heard in controlling the affairs of his own county; but if he has property in half a dozen different divisions of that county, he can only vote in one. We shall hope, by-and-by, to see the same principle applied to Imperial Elections. There is one point on which I should like to ask the Lord Advocate a question, and that is with regard to Clause 10, relating to the Convener of the Council. The clause says—

"The Convener of the Council shall be a fit person, elected by the Council from among the Councillors or persous qualified to be such."

Am I right in believing this to mean that a person may be elected as Convener of the Council who, nevertheless, has not succeeded in obtaining election to the Council? If so, that is a provision to which I shall oppose the strongest objection; because I hold that the Convener ought, at least, to be a man able to inspire sufficient confidence on the part of the electors of his division of the county to obtain his election to that body. I pass by the method of dividing the counties and settling the number of Councillors, although I think that it is a difficult matter. I think it would be satisfactory if we could be told the number of Councillors contemplated in proportion to the population. I will also pass by another point which is open to discussion — namely, whether there shall be an election once in three years, or whether we should adopt the burgh system of one out of three members retiring every year. Although that involves an election every year, I think there are obvious advantages in that system. I now come to the powers to be attributed to the Council when formed, and a prominent point with regard to this is that it is proposed for certain purposes to maintain the Commissioners of Supply and the Justices of the Peace. Now, why is this? We are, in fact, to establish a new body upon a popular basis with great capacity and power for work, and yet we are not to hand over to them all the duties of the body they supercede. Does the Lord Advocate think that the Commissioners of Supply are overburdened with work? Nine-tenths of the Commissioners take no interest in the work at all, and those who do get through it in a very short space of time. At any rate, they are in no way overburdened. Clause 15, indeed, proposes in a vague sort of way to indicate certain powers which may in future be transferred to the County Councils, but I do not think, although they sound well on paper, that they will amount to much after all. Practicaly, we shall remain in this position, that the Commissioners of Supply have very little to do, and the greater part of what they have to do will be still retained in their hands and not transferred to the County Councils. Perhaps we may be able to judge better of the proposals of the Government by the actual language of the Bill. Why is this moribund body to be retained in life? Clause 12 maintains in force all the enactments relating to them and the full machinery for keeping up the list of Commissioners of Supply, in order that they may meet once a year in the same place and on the same day as the County Council, but without transacting any business beyond the election of Convener of the Commissioners of Supply and the election of seven of their number to act as a committee for certain other purposes—those purposes being specified in Clause 18. This Committee of seven Commissioners of Supply together with seven Councillors, plus the Sheriff, are to be entrusted with the whole powers under the Police Act, with the power of sanctioning any work involving capital, expenditure, and with the powers of borrowing money now possessed by the Commissioners of Supply. These are the sole purposes for which this great machinery is to be maintained. Of course, the most important matter is the control of the police. Why not trust the County Councils? Is there any reason why, in Scotland of all countries, the electors and the elected shall not have complete control over the police? Why should not the County Council of Mid Lothian and the County Council of Lanarkshire have the

control of the police as well as their neighbours in Edinburgh and Glasgow? Will the Lord Advocate or any Scotchman sitting behind him say they cannot trust their countrymen in this matter? I have a shrewd idea that this decision has been arrived at, not because of any consideration of the capacity or trustworthiness of the people of Mid Lothian or Lanarkshire, but for another reason altogether, the clue to which is to be found in a sentence of the speech of the Lord Advocate in introducing the Bill. The learned Lord said—

"The scheme must be one applicable to the whole of Scotland, and it must, therefore, be fitted to stand the strain of the various social and economic conditions to be found in a country which extends from the English border to the furthest Hebrides."

"The furthest Hebrides" is to be the standard of the extent to which the County Councils are to be trusted, and I am sure it is in "the furthest Hebrides" the clue to this mystery is to be found. It is the fear of the crofters which has prevented the control of the police being given to the County Councils. There is a great deal of shaking of the head and tremor in the voice over the crofters, and it is not unnatural, because the Lord Advocate and some of his predecessors have had trouble with the crofters and their notions of law and order. Now, my answer to the argument thus hinted is twofold. In my opinion, and in that of many others, the way to secure in the Hebrides, as in some other quarters of the world, which need not be particularly named, the orderly obedience of the people to constituted authority, is to make that authority spring from the people themselves; and nothing is more likely to have a sobering and steadying effect on the spirit of the crofter population, than that they should be admitted to a full share of power and responsibility in the maintenance of order—in fact, that you should give them the very thing you now expressly and designedly deny. My second answer is that, supposing there is some danger and inconvenience in this course, and I can imagine, after all that has happened, that any sudden transfer of these powers may be attended with temporary inconvenience, why should all Scotland on that account be punished and hindered? Why should the crofter difficulty which exists in certain counties—and in certain parts of such counties only—why should the crofter difficulty, which is greatly exaggerated by the Government, and for which the crofters are by no means chiefly to blame, furnish a bed of Procrustes to which every county in Scotland must be fitted? I protest against such a course. Let the crofter difficulty, if crofter difficulty there be, be dealt with if necessary by special provisions, but do not let the capable citizens of Fife and Dumfries, on account of that difficulty, be defrauded of their right to this large element in good Government. I do not think, therefore, that that reason for this part of the Bill will hold water. But there may be other reasons. It may be to please the Commissioners of Supply, and to let them down easily. My conviction is that this is wholly unnecessary. We owe much to the Commissioners of Supply, although no doubt they may sometimes have acted so as to be found fault with. All of us sometime or other make mistakes. On the whole, the Commissioners of Supply have discharged their duty well and faithfully, and they will get their reward by being elected County Councillors, and taking a large part in the proceedings of the new body. Of course, they may have a certain sentiment with regard to the supercession of their long established and honourable body, but I have been careful to study the proceedings of the Commissioners of Supply since this Bill was introduced, and I frankly and hopefully recognize the public spirit and equanimity with which they have accepted the great changes which the Bill introduces. In one or two instances they have themselves suggested that what I propose should be done; that they should be put an end to altogether, and their duties transferred bodily to the County Councils; and this on the ground that I have urged, that everything which tends to increase the functions and usefulness of the new body and adds to their dignity and importance, will enable them to perform their work more efficiently. I have now something to say with regard to the Justices of the Peace. I draw a distinction between the Justices of the Peace in England and in Scotland. In Scotland they are not so important a body as the County Magistrates in Eng-

land. In England the office confers a certain amount of social position, and h s been much sought after. In Scotland that is not so to any large extent, and the duties of a Justice of the Peace in Scotland may be divided into four. They take affidavits, sign warrants, sit occasionally to try petty criminal cases and small assaults, and they control the liquor licenses. The three first duties are only trifling in their nature, and might very well be handed over, as in Burghs, to Magistrates elected from among the Councillors themselves. If so, how much greater is the expenditure of this course with regard to their licensing duties? When we come to the question of dealing with licenses, what is there that more closely affects the well-being of the inhabitants of the county than that question? Let us, then, establish the principle that these functions, whatever they are, ought to be in the hands of men who owe their authority to election by the constituency of the county. And now I come to a question of some difficulty and delicacy, namely, the provision made in the Bill for dealing with county assessments. It is proposed that there should be a record taken of the average expenditure of the last five years; that that amount should be stereotyped; and that so long as the expenditure does not exceed that amount it should remain payable by the owners as it is at present, but that, if it exceeds that amount, then the excess should be divided between the owner and the occupier. I recognize both the desire for fairness and also the ingenuity shown by that arrangement, although I doubt whether it will be altogether fair to stereotype the last five years' expenditure. The expenditure in so short a period may have been excessive, or may have been below the general average. But my principal objection to it is that it proposes to continue on a basis which may be unfair, an obsolete and exceptional arrangement —namely, that of putting the assessment entirely on the owner. I admit that it is not easy to find a perfect alternative for this, but I do not see that there would be any great objection to allowing the county assessment, which, after all, is a small matter in the whole county budget, to be divided between the owner and occupier as all the other assessments are — saving, of course, existing leases. Of course the tenants might object to the small addition that would be placed upon them, but I do not think that that would be a large matter compared with the advantage of putting the whole assessment upon a uniform basis. In that way we should get a better and more uniform system. Turning from the County Council to the subordinate areas, I attach great importance to the District Councils and Parish Councils. Many a man can diligently attend to public duties in them, who could not journey periodically to a remote country town, and the more we add to the dignity and importance of their functions the better will be the men who are willing to serve on them. The Bill creates District Councils, for the purposes of roads and of health. Of this I entirely approve, because I believe that the Health Acts would be much better administered in a larger area than the parish. It is proposed that two members from each Parochial Board should sit in the District Council. Now, it must not be forgotten that in certain counties, and even in parts of one county, parishes are much smaller than in others, and if two members are returned by each parish there may be great disproportion in the number of members; and I think that some regard should be had to population. With regard to the Parochial Boards Bill, to which I can only cursorily refer, I object to maintaining the distinction between owner and occupier, and also to the large powers given in certain cases to the Board of Supervision. Ido not think that that proposal will be favoured by the Scotch people, at least, not until the Board of Supervision is made more subject to the control and more open to the influence of public opinion than it is at present. I must repeat what I have already said, that there is a general feeling which I cordially share, in favour of extending as far as possible the consolidation of small administrative bodies. We have now in Scotland a School Board in each parish, and there is a general opinion that that is a superfluity, and that, however it may have been in the days when the present school system was being initiated, there are now too many Boards. I should like to know what is the opinion of the Government on the question of consolidating the School

Board with the Parochial Board. I am not one of those who complain of them for not having dealt with this matter in these Bills, because I am aware that it would require a considerable amount of adjustment in regard to the different authorities, and also as between the authorities and the Education Department; but I know that there is a strong and growing feeling in Scotland in favour of having one Parish Authority, which should deal with all these matters. The last point, to which I desire to direct the attention of the House is one of great importance. The Bill proposes to devote a large part of the assistance given from the Probate Duty in aid of local expenditure to the purpose of relieving from the payment of school fees. The Lord Advocate himself will admit that this is a point upon which the House is entitled to expect further information. In the first place it is not easy to understand the financial clauses of the Bill, and to reconcile the figures in them with the figures otherwise given to the House. For myself, I confess that I have found the clauses of the Bill embodying the financial proposals to be of a somewhat incomprehensible nature. And, in the second place, we shall expect to hear from the Government what the arrangements with the Education Department as to the payment of fees are to be. The prominent fact is that the money is inadequate for the purpose; and I think that is one of the great changes, which, if it is to be brought about, ought to be effected thoroughly at once. I will not enter into details, but I may at least indicate two sums which, it seems to me, may well be added to the amount at our disposal for this purpose—namely, the £36,000 recently given as an additional grant for roads, and the £30,000 to be devoted to the relief of the Highlands. We do not object to the £30,000 for the relief of the Highlands, but we do not see why it should be contributed at the cost of the ratepayers of the other counties of Scotland; and I think that a strong pressure will be brought to bear on the Government to devote that sum and probably also the other to a more effective purpose. But besides this question of money we are confronted with another—namely, whether this boon should be extended to denominational schools? If it is not so extended there can be little doubt that the result must be prejudicial if not disastrous to those schools. For myself, I would say that, so far as we may proceed in these matters on rigid principle, I am opposed to any further assistance being given to denominational schools. But why am I opposed to any further assistance being given to them? It is because I have always been opposed to any assistance whatever being given to them; and, further, because I am opposed to denominational teaching, whether in Board Schools or in outside schools. But I wish to say frankly that, in my judgment, when on a memorable day in 1872 an Amendment was carried against the Government of the day in favour of continuing religious instruction according to use and wont in the parish schools of Scotland, the opposition to grants to denominational schools in Scotland was gravely and fatally compromised. If Parliament authorizes the teaching in Board Schools of the elements of religious doctrine according to the tenets of the Presbyterian Church, with what face can we be so fastidious as to religious teaching in other schools? My own opinion has not altered. I am ready to protest now, as I have always protested against either establishing or perpetuating assistance to denominational schools. But when we come to deal with it as a question of equity between the existing Board Schools and the existing denominational schools the case is one of some difficulty. Denominational schools are few in Scotland; of the scholars in average attendance, I believe 82½ per cent are to be found in Board Schools, 10 per cent in Protestant Schools and 7½ per cent in Catholic schools. I am inclined to view with favour the suggestion shadowed forth by my hon. Friend the Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter), to whom we are indebted for his intelligent and energetic advocacy of free education in Scotland, that if this been is to be extended to denominational schools it should be only for a definite term, and that they should thus be afforded a probationary, or, as I may call it, a purgatorial period in which to prepare either for absorption in the School Board system, or for establishing an independent existence for themselves. These, Sir, are the points which occur to me as most calling for

remark at this stage. The objections I have made are most of them important, and some of them almost cardinal objections, and let me state my confident belief that in most of the opinions I have expressed, though not of course in all that I have urged in favour of them, I am not only supported by the great bulk of those with whom it is my pride and pleasure to act in this House, but I think I may say that many of the points, and especially those with regard to extending the powers and strengthening the hands of the Local Authorities, will meet with some response among those who support the Government, both in this House and in the country. In that belief I venture to make an appeal to the Scotch Members. I have already made an appeal to the English Members to give us fair play, and not force their prejudices into the decision of the question. I now appeal to the representatives of Scotland in every part of the House, that we should unite in an earnest effort so to improve and develop this scheme of local administration as to confer upon our country of Scotland—the object, as she is, of our affectionate devotion and service — the inestimable blessing of having in all her districts a free, stable and equitable government.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I feel sure that all who have listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down will agree with me when I say he has approached this question in a temper and spirit for which the Government are greatly obliged, and if it represents, as I hope it does, the great mass of opinion on his own side of the House, his speech ought to facilitate the passing of a measure the broad outlines of which appear to have commended it to the people of Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman in the early part of his speech rightly warned the House that the measure ought to be looked at from the point of view of Scotland. To that view I venture to give my public adhesion, for I think it would be absurd for the House to approach the consideration of any question applying to only one part of the kingdom without taking into account the previous history and particular wants of that part of the kingdom. We should be ill-advised if we were to thrust our own ideas upon any part of the kingdom wholly irrespective of the specialities and peculiarities which mark its history and present position. But the right hon. Gentleman did not appear to carry out his own recommendation, because he announced a firm determination on the part of himself and his friends to give every means in their power to resist a Bill which we bring forward to complete our general scheme of Local Government for Scotland, I mean the Bill dealing with the parochial system. The right hon. Gentleman may or may not dislike the Bill, but surely he must be aware that public opinion has emphatically pronounced that any scheme dealing with Local Government in Scotland would be extremely inadequate and would not respond to the wishes of the people if it left wholly out of account some alteration and reform of the parochial system. The right hon. Gentleman has dealt with a large number of comparatively, if not absolutely, trifling questions. It would not, I think, be of advantage if at this stage I were to discuss the point about women suffrage, or the one man one vote question, or the power proposed to be given to the new Council to elect as its Convener or Chairman some person who has not received the approval of the constituencies. With regard to the last point I may, however, say I think we should be ill-advised if, in adherence to rigid rule, we excluded from the service of a County Council some gentleman of large experience who meets, as he must do, with the general approval of those who have been elected, simply because, from his age or for some other reason, he was unwilling to go through the fatigue which necessarily attends an election. I should be sorry if the choice of the Council should be restricted in a matter in which surely they ought to be trusted if they are to be trusted at all with the management of their own business. The right hon. Gentleman is very indignant because we have removed from the power of the County Council the management of the police, but surely he was somewhat inconsistent in contending that a County Council is capable of managing the police but is not capable of selecting its own chairman. The right hon. Gentleman desires to give County Councils and subsidiary bodies some power of dealing with education.

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did express a desire to give them that power, but I admitted I could not find fault with the Government for not including it in this measure.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: In that case I will not pursue the subject. The right hon. Gentleman admits that we should have been ill-advised if we had weighted the Bill by adding any large provisions dealing with the reform of bodies which should have the management of education in Scotland.

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did not go quite so far as that; I merely said I did not blame the Government.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will not inquire further as to the particular shade of opinion desired to be expressed; but I will ask the right hon. Gentleman to extend the same method of reasoning to the questions of making magistrates elective and of handing over to them the whole function of licensing. I will not discuss the principle of electing by popular representation those who have to administer justice, because I am aware it exists in the burghs of Scotland and has worked well. I hold the general opinion, in common with most of those who have considered the question, that it is not a desirable method of selecting those on whom rest the responsibility of administering the comparatively trifling matters handed over to magistrates in Scotland. But when you come to licensing you enter upon a much larger question; and last year's experience of the attempt to deal with the subject of licensing in the English Bill has had the effect of a warning to the Government, and will make it most reluctant to imperil the chances of this Bill by opening up the larger questions which must arise whenever the licensing question is touched. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to hesitate and pause before he presses the Government to embark upon so perilous an undertaking. The right hon. Gentleman has criticized the plan proposed with regard to the incidence of rating in the future. The scheme adopted by the Government is that the average rate paid for the last five years shall be stereotyped and be regarded as a permanent charge upon the present payers of the rates—namely, the owners, while any future increase of this average rate shall be paid half by the owners and half by the occupiers. I may at once say that the Government are not particularly wedded to the period of five years, but desire to fix a period which would give a fair average. The right hon. Gentleman appears to wish that the rate should be staightway divided between occupiers and owners. No doubt that would be more simple, and I admit we had to exercise considerable ingenuity in order to find some other plan. The reason for our doing so was this: that we were most unwilling where it could be avoided to impose any burden that could be avoided on any class that we introduced to the franchise. Of course, if the House is inclined to adopt the view propounded by the right hon. Gentleman it certainly is not a matter upon which Her Majesty's Government will offer any opposition. The right hon. Gentleman, however, probably understands why the Bill has been framed as it is. Her Majesty's Government do not desire that it should appear as if it were a condition of the conferring of these extended rights upon occupiers that they should pay more rates. There are still two matters of controversy to which I desire to refer—the question of the Standing Committee and the question of the service franchise.. With regard to the Standing Committee, the Bill deals with two quite separate topics, capital expenditure and police. As to the proposals of this Bill in reference to capital expenditure, there is considerable analogy between this Bill and the Roads and Bridges Act of 1878, in which a distinction was drawn between capital expenditure and ordinary expenditure. And the reason for the distinction being so drawn is a fair and sound one. Ordinary expenditure falls half on the owners and half on the occupiers, and thus all the voters are interested in securing economy. But with regard to capital expenditure, owing to the system of short leases which exists in Scotland, it falls practically entirely on the owners. A sensible farmer before renewing his lease takes into consideration the amount of the public burdens which attach to the tenure of his farm. The result is, that those whose leases have half expired have a very strong interest in immediate expenditure, and only a faint and feeble interest in economy with regard to capital expenditure, the repayment of

which extends over many years, and the burden of which consequently falls on the landowner as soon as the lease runs out. Therefore, there are strong economical reasons why capital expenditure should be controlled by a body elected not by occupiers but by owners. This distinction between capital expenditure and ordinary expenditure which has been drawn in regard to bridges and roads is a just one, and it has worked satisfactorily for the past 11 years in Scotland. I have no doubt that the similar distinction upon which this portion of the Bill is based will be received without opposition by the Scottish people. Now I come to a more controversial question. With regard to the question of the police, the House has been treated to a good deal of commonplace rhetoric. I do not lay down the absolute principle that police administration ought not to be intrusted to municipalities, but it certainly is a matter quite distinct and standing on a different basis to other matters of local administration. Localities are at liberty to be extravagant, for it would be at their own expense, or to have bad roads, or to overbuild or underbuild themselves, for this would be at the cost of their own convenience; but they cannot be allowed to mismanage their police. This is a matter of Imperial concern and affects the administration of justice. This Bill does not remove the police entirely from popular control. Police administration, it is true, is not handed over to the County Councils or to bodies elected purely on a popular basis, but it is handed over to a body in which the representation exactly follows the payment of rates—half by the owners and half by the occupiers. As the rates are divided so is the representation. This cannot be regarded, in view of Scotch traditions in the matter, as antagonistic to popular interests. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to think he had extracted from my right hon. Friend an admission, of which he ought, it is suggested, to be ashamed, that this plan has been adopted because of the somewhat disorganized state of affairs in certain parts of Scotland, and he appeared to think that all that is necessary to set everything right in the Hebrides and the Western Isles is to give the people full control of the police. But if this were done, and the police were handed over to those who have not shown themselves over zealous for the law, serious consequences might ensue for which this House would then be practically responsible. I do not, however, deny that this was one argument which weighed largely with the Government when they were framing this Bill. But I would add that in our opinion the question of police is not on the same footing as other subjects which are handed over to local administration, and we think our proposal is one likely to conduce to the true interests of Scotch local administration. With regard to the service franchise, the right hon. Gentleman objects to the Bill excluding from the county franchise a class of persons to whom the Parliamentary franchise has been given, and he gave us an entirely new version of the ancient maxim that representation and taxation should go together. It is a maxim with which we are all familiar; it is a maxim to which assent has been given by every politician, practical and theoretical, for the last 50 years, and never before have I heard the interpretation put upon it which the ingenuity of the right hon. Gentleman has enabled him to extract from the wisdom of our forefathers. But I do not desire to rest my defence of the proposal of the Government upon any question of pure theory. I want the House to face exactly what we are doing by this great administrative revolution which we propose to carry into effect. We are going to hand over the whole power in almost all the agricultural counties of Scotland to the service franchise holders. The holders of the service franchise will be a majority, and in some cases a large majority, of the total number of the voters in a great many of the counties of Scotland. I believe there are no better citizens in the community than the ploughmen and the agricultural labourers of the agricultural districts of Scotland; and I would mete out to them no measure different from that which I would mete out to any other members of the community. But I would not willingly intrust any class with the whole control over the rates of a district, when that class does not contribute a single sixpence to the rates. I am one of those who believe that the present system which we desire to inaugurate will be extended; that it

will embrace new functions and new duties; and that the County Council may, before two years have elapsed, be intrusted with other and no less important functions than those which are now to be given to it. I am not prepared, in view of the possible extension of the functions of the Council in the directions of matters of great social importance, to hand over the whole electoral power to people who do not now, and never will, contribute in any shape or form to the cost of the schemes which the Council may carry into effect. The right hon. Gentleman was himself aware that that argument was a powerful one, for he endeavoured to meet it. The right hon. Gentleman told the House that, though not directly taxed, the agricultural community of Scotland were indirectly sufferers by any augmentation of expenditure. I should like to see that idea more fully developed than it has been, because I am utterly unable to see how in any efficient sense that burden is thrown upon the agricultural labourers. Certainly their wages will not diminish by any augmentation of the rates. Wages in Scotland as well as elsewhere are determined solely by supply and demand and by nothing else; and unless you alter the supply of or the demand for labour in the agricultural districts you will not alter wages by a single halfpenny. It is quite true that we may conceive a point at which rates will so fall upon land that some of the land will be thrown out of cultivation wholly, or, being under the plough, will be thrown to grass, with the result that the demand for labour will diminish, and the labourers' wages will diminish in like proportion. But surely the right hon. Gentleman opposite does not regard that as a sort of check which we ought to put upon local extravagance, and does not wish to wait until the whole method of cultivating land is altered before those who vote for these schemes feel the pinch of the expenditure which results from them? If local or any expenditure is to be carried out in an economical spirit, those who are responsible for the expenditure must feel the results of that expenditure. That is the principle underlying the maxim which has been so strangely perverted by the right hon. Gentleman—namely, that taxation and representation should go together. I implore the House to think, not once or twice, but many times before they abandon that well established principle, not in favour of a small class, but in favour of a class who will, in the agricultural parts of Scotland, have the whole control of the constitution of the County Council. I hope that hon. Gentlemen opposite will do the Government the justice to acknowledge that they have not introduced the Bill with any desire to exclude any man from the franchise. We desire to see included in the scope of our measure the whole agricultural community of Scotland, consistently with the broad principle which I have laid down. Any alteration in our Bill which will facilitate that we shall gladly welcome; but do not let us, in order to get over a temporary difficulty, do something which will not only in the present, but even in the future, conduce to that extravagance which is the great danger to local self-government. It is the only great danger, and if we once allow it to eat into our municipal system, it will bring that system with dishonour to the ground. The right hon. Gentleman has a perfect right to ask the Government for some more explicit information upon their proposal with regard to the relief of the education rate than has yet been given. I hasten to satisfy that demand. Of course, as the House is aware, the original intention which animated the Government in allocating the sum of £171,000 to Scotch local purposes was to relieve rates and not to touch education, but we found that the general feeling in Scotland was very much more in favour of relieving the weight of the cost of education than of relieving the rates, and in obedience to the general feeling we have altered the plan of allocating these Imperial funds to local purposes. Now, we found considerable difficulty in elaborating a wholly satisfactory plan by which the relief of school rates could be given. One very simple and obvious suggestion was to make an all-round relief of rates of about 2d. The £171,000 would go that length; and we might have diminished every existing school fee by that amount. But it will be observed that the only result of that plan would be to leave it to the school managers to determine whether the relief should be given to the parents of the children or to the ratepayers, because they might easily

contrive that the whole of that should go into the pockets of those who now have to pay the school rates. The principles which have governed the action of the Government in the matter are these:—In the first place we are clearly of opinion that voluntarily schools should be treated with perfect equality. The right hon. Gentleman opposite frankly told the House that he objects to that, and that if he had his way he would give no State aid whatever to voluntary schools. But conscious, probably, that that is not an opinion that would find a sufficient body of adherents in the House, he threw the weight of his great authority in favour of the scheme of the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire (Mr. Hunter), in which the equality, so to speak, between Board Schools and other State-aided schools, should be continued for a certain period, and should then lapse. The Government are opposed in principle to any inequality of treatment between the two kinds of schools, and we cannot accept either the drastic proposal made by the right hon. Gentleman or the modification of the suggestion which is due to the ingenuity of the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to explain. I said I was opposed to all assistance being given to denominational schools. But I am equally opposed to all denominational teaching in Board Schools. As long as there is donominational teaching in Board Schools I do not think that the case is strong against the denominational schools outside.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think the objectionable proposal is made better by adding another objection. I will not pursue the point, but continue to enumerate the general principles which have guided our policy in this matter. Our second principle is that the relief given should be substantial relief to those who at present suffer under the burden of school fees. Our third principle is that, whatever we do, we should abolish that which has proved the greatest cause of friction in the educational system of Scotland, and which has more than anything else tended to swell the cry in favour of free education—namely, the hardship inflicted upon poor parents by the fact that they have to go to the Parochial Board which administers poor relief before they can get school relief for their children. Therefore our proposal will have the result of entirely eliminating from our educational system the Parochial Board. We propose to distribute the sum at our disposal, the sum of £171,000, amongst State-aided schools in Scotland in proportion to the average attendance at those schools, and to apply it so as to entirely free the first three standards. But we are perfectly conscious that this scheme cannot stop there without being seriously detrimental to the interests of education above the third standard; and, though believing that to free the first three standards will be the most sensible relief to give parents, we know that it will, if unaccompanied by any further provision, have the effect of checking education at the point where the assistance is stopped. It will not, in our opinion, be wise or proper that the parent who is unable to pay school fees for his children in the first three standards should suddenly find when his children are sufficiently advanced to take advantage of the fourth, fifth, and sixth standards, that he is obliged for the first time to go to the Parochial Board to get the fees necessary. We therefore propose to associate that gift towards the education of the first three standards with an arrangement, under which every State-aided school shall be obliged to provide a sufficient number of places for free education in the higher standards for those children who may require it. The first three standards are to be entirely free; above the first three standards every body of school managers is to be obliged to provide free education for such number of children as may require it. Every parent, therefore, will be freed from the necessity of going to the parochial board to obtain education for his children who have passed the third standard. The whole question of pauperism will be eliminated under the new system. The relief is about £171,000 a year; about £155,000 of that will be sufficient to relieve children in the first three standards. There will, therefore, be a residue which will at any rate go far towards aiding school managers in providing places for education above the first three standards. Whether it is enough or not, the total relief will

not only be great to those who have to pay fees, but to school managers as well, because it will relieve them of bad debts, and of the obligation to educate those who do not pay. I may also say, in order to make the proposal perfectly clear, that in certain cases of large Schools Boards, like the Glasgow Board, they will not be prevented if they please from having certain schools entirely free, because this is an elastic principle which they may apply, and which the Government will not desire to prevent them applying. The total result is that every parent will be relieved from his school fees up the third standard, and no parent whose child is above the third standard will require to go to the parochial board to educate that child. I have only to add that I hope the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite are a fair sample of what we may expect from the House. If that is so, Parliament will be able in the course of the present Session to give to the people of Scotland a large and liberal measure of local self-government, and to carry out, in a form suitable to the wants of Scotland, the great measure which we initiated last year for the sister country.

*MR. FIRTH (Dundee): I have read through the Scotch Bills with very considerable interest, in order to compare them with the English Bill of last year with the working of which I have had a certain amount of experience. I am bound to say now, with respect to this Bill, as I said with respect to the Bill of last year that I think the Government are to be congratulated upon having found themselves able to incorporate in it so many important and useful and democratic principles. I find the Scotch Bills, moreover, from the point of view of English requirements, especially interesting both in what they give and in what they omit to give. I cannot altogether refrain from holding the opinion that it might have conduced to a more successful development of the Scotch system of Government if there had been some assembly in Scotland to whom the preparation of it could have been committed, because it is not to be denied that as regards the large proportion of the Members of this House they come to the consideration of this question without that full qualification of knowledge which is requisite. But, at any rate, the Bills as they stand will be a very great advantage to Scotland. With respect to things which are omitted, I find, for example, that there are no Aldermen. The Lord Advocate said that Scotland does not know Aldermen. Scotland in that respect is a happy country, and I am glad to find that, although the Government spoke in terms of profound praise of Aldermen last year, they have not had the courage to suggest that they should be established on the free soil of Scotland. I cannot quite see why the whole of the Bills might not have been included in a single measure. With respect to the proposals as to Private Bill legislation, without putting the opinion forward very strongly, I think the question might be well worth consideration whether County Councils, as regards the provision of water, gas, tramways, and matters of that kind, might not have almost final authority; and even in respect of railways, the joining together of a series of counties might perchance prove a solution of the difficulty. But, like the County Councils of last year, the County Councils constituted under these Bills are in an incomplete condition. They have comparatively few of the functions which it is to be hoped that ultimately they will obtain. I think nothing could be more true than the statement of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) that the more power you give to a public body the greater will be the ambition of men to become members of it, and the greater will be the weight it will carry. A body possessing the few powers of these Councils will not have the advantage of the keen eye of public attention directed to it, but perhaps the opinion which is very widely held in Scotland, that the County Councils may well control the police and School Boards and so forth, may find its realization in the future. Another good point which may be useful to England is the system which obtains in Scotland of a rate divided between the owner and the occupier. That is a thing to which we in London are looking forward. Still more important are the observations of the last speaker with respect to free education. A large portion of the payment for the education of the very poor of Scotland is now to be taken away, and this I believe will prove to

be the thin end of the wedge. With respect to the Government proposal as to District Committees, I am extremely glad to find that the County Councillors of the different Electoral Divisions are to be members of the District Committee. That is a proposal which was made in the Bill of 1884. Its object is to bring the two bodies that worked together into inter-dependence, and into the closest connection with each other. I have had a considerable number of representations on these matters, and have read the resolutions of the Commissioners of Supply in Forfarshire. They have passed a resolution as to the desirability of having a single register for all purposes. I would go further than putting women and Peers on the Parliamentary register, by having provision made which might usefully have been made in the Bill of last year, that women electing may also be elected. There are certain services which in the working of the Bill of last year we have found women able to render, and which I am sure would be of advantage in the Scotch system also. I re-echo what was said with regard to the desirability of having the service franchise extended. If these intelligent peasants are entitled to elect Members of Parliament who are to deal with the greatest interests of a large section of the human race, surely they may be regarded as entitled to vote in the election of County Councillors. The privilege is to be conferred on these people if they will voluntarily pay a rate. I cannot imagine it possible, even amongst so intelligent a people as those who will be admitted to vote by this franchise, there are many who will be willing to undergo the burden of paying a rate for the purpose of electing a County Councillor. The suggestion that they are men who have no stake in the country, has been well met by my right hon. Friend. The people who have the greatest stake in the proper carrying out of the government and laws of the country are the people who lose most when these laws are bad, and gain most when they are good—the poorer class of the community. With respect to the question of the police, it is a retrogressive step to take the control of the police at present enjoyed by towns of between 5,000 to 7,000 inhabitants, and place it in the hands of a General Committee only partially representative. I trust the Members for Scotland will fight out on the floor of the House the battle which we fought out as best we could for London in respect to control of the police, resting their case on that true governing principle laid down by Lord John Russell that the control of the civil forces ought to be in the hands of popular representatives. The constitution of this Joint Committee is a very interesting matter. We had a Joint Committee constituted under the Bill of last year, and on the point there was a good deal of discussion. Our Joint Committee here in the capital have no control over the police whatever. As I understand the Joint Committee proposed to be constituted under this Bill, they will have the control of the police and will be constituted half from the elected authorities, and half from the Commissioners of Supply, who, after all, having regard to their constitution, can only be regarded as an accidental body. I cannot see why a Committee of these County Councils in Scotland, with a Convener instead of the Sheriff at their head, should not be able to control the police as well as the local bodies in small Scotch burghs. I hope this point will be contested, and that the result will be that they will get this power not only in the interests of Scotland, but because I think the example set by Scotland in this and other Scotch matters cannot fail to react beneficially upon us here. With respect to the Joint Committee itself, there is, I find, a very large body of opinion outside that it might very well be omitted, that it need not be constituted at all. As a matter of fact, the County Council will be well qualified to discharge the functions of controlling the police, and the finances of the County for the purpose which appear to be the only two duties this body is to be constituted and carry out. With respect to the Commissioners of Supply, I may say that many of them are looking foward to finding their occupation gone and desire to put an end to their own official existence and to be elected to the County Council. The Bill does not touch the question of licensing. That I know is a thorny and difficult question. It has been asked why could not a Committee of the Council deal with licenses. I do not see why, following

the system of elected bailies in Scotland, you might not make the whole of the Members of the County Council, Justices of the Peace, and so solve the licensing question at once. Whether that suggestion is a practical one or not there can, I think, be no doubt that the ultimate solution of the licensing question will be found here as in America, to leave every local area—and the county may well form such an area—to decide the matter for itself. There are some other points in the Bill to which I might call attention, having taken much interest in the development of local government, and having watched the—as I think—great success which had attended the Act passed last year, and I am extremely gratified to find so many of the methods so much of the principle of that Act incorporated in the measure now before the House. I am still more gratified to find that great principles which have been largely advocated on public platforms, are embodied in the measure before us. I believe the necessity for embodying them in the Bill, is the necessity that arises from the high average intelligence of the people with whom this Bill has to deal, and when this Bill leaves the House moulded by the representatives of the people of Scotland, I cannot doubt that it will prove for that country, as the previous Bill has proved for England, a very great benefit, and that it will develop local life and local government, and be a final advantage to the whole nation.

SIR ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL (Renfrew, W.): I must congratulate the Government upon the Bill they have introduced into the House, and, having some practical knowledge of local government in my own county, I may perhaps be allowed to speak on some of the points involved. I must say for myself that for a long time I have been in favour of doing away with the existing system of Commissioners of Supply and raising the whole of the rating from owner and occupier. That would certainly clear the ground very much for a local government scheme, but at the same time I must bow to the superior wisdom of the Government, and there is no doubt that the Bill they have introduced is drawn in a masterly manner, and that it will be acceptable to the people of Scotland. With regard to the Commissioners of Supply, I think it would be a good thing to keep them in their position for certain purposes, and only to repeal that part of the Act which deals with their powers of rating. It would be an advantage for them still to look after the income tax, as there is a considerable amount of jealousy amongst manufacturers about their affairs being interfered with by those who may be said to be in the same position as themselves. With regard to stereotyping the rates, there are many counties which have paid large sums of money for various things, and I do not think it would be fair to stereotype a rate which is for general purposes, and which includes a heavy expenditure. During the last ten years there has been in my county an extra rate varying from ½d. to 1d. We have out of that built new Sheriff Courts, and we are now engaged in building a new police station and new county buildings. I do not think it would be fair to stereotype this extra rate. I think it would be well to give powers to the Sheriff to discern between the actual expenditure and the ordinary expenditure, and to stereotype only that expenditure which is needed for carrying out the general purposes of the county. I think also that the amount produced by the rate at the present time, and not the rate itself should be stereotyped. In Renfrewshire I think we shall, perhaps in a year or a year and a half be deprived of a large portion of the most valuable part of the county through an increase of the Glasgow boundaries. How then will the rate be apportioned? I think some provisions should be made in the Bill for that eventuality. I was exceedingly glad to hear from my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) the explanation he gave with regard to the amount to be given towards free education. I am gratified that the efforts I myself made to point out to the Government the necessity of giving this surplus money in aid of education rather than of spreading it over an area where it would not be felt by so many people who are as desirous and as deserving of it as many of the poor in Scotland, has been so successful. At the same time I must acknowledge with thanks the work done by other hon. Gentlemen in the same direction. As far as I understand, £155,000 will be given for the purpose of paying all the

school fees in State-aided schools, national and otherwise up to the Third Standard, and a further sum will be devoted to the payment of fees for higher education on the recommendation of the School Boards. I think that is an admirable arrangement. I wish the sum had been larger, but we must cut our coat according to our cloth. We must be thankful for small mercies. I think the people of Scotland will consider this a great feature in the Bill, and will do their utmost to carry out the provisions for the benefit of the country generally. And I trust that this House in dealing with the matter will do its utmost to improve the Bill. One other question remains upon which I should like to say a word. At the present moment in Scotland we are rather proud of the manner in which we have been able to carry out our local arrangements, and I hope, therefore, that on the final modelling of this measure the precedent of the English Act will not be too rigidly adhered to. There are a good many things in the English Act that are foreign to Scotland, and I therefore think we ought to work as much as possible on the sense of our own people, having regard to what has been the position of local government in Scotland up to this time. I wish I could see a way out of the difficulty as to the service franchise, to which question I have devoted some attention. There is much to be said for making local rates felt personally by every man. On the other hand, theoretically, those who receive their houses as part of their wages are paying towards the rates and the up-keep of the county. Is it possible, under the circumstances, to stereotype the rate to be paid by the service franchise holders, and, if the rate rises higher, then call upon them to pay? We should endeavour in whatever we do to reduce the registration to as simple a form as possible. We have a considerable amount to pay for registration, and if we are to have a supplementary register as well it will largely add to the burden. The owners, who are 25 per cent of the whole of the ratepayers of the county, at present have to pay for the whole registration, but if any fresh registration is necessary it should be placed on the shoulders of the county ratepayers, owners and occupiers equally. I hope the Bill will receive due consideration. The Government have done their best to prepare a scheme which will meet with the approval of the Scottish people, and at the same time to safeguard these interests which it is necessary in the interest of the country to protect.

*MR. CAMERON CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston): I agree with the hon. Baronet in thinking that the people of Scotland welcome this Bill as an honest attempt to deal as efficiently with the County Government in Scotland as in the past Municipal Government has been dealt with by means of the Town Councils. Amongst the points in the Bill which has been especially dealt with to-night is the service franchise. Well, I, for one, believe that the Government have adopted in the counties the very widest franchise they could possibly have taken compatible with fairness and common sense. Considering that in a large number of counties these men voting under the service franchise would be a majority of the whole electorate, we should have a body unable to consider very judicially questions involving the expenditure of the rates. I cannot help feeling that the duties of the County Councils will be in a very large measure financial duties. At every turn they will have to consider whether or not the expenditure it is proposed to incur on improvements will be compensated by the advantages of those improvements. There will constantly be a comparison to be drawn between the disadvantage of the rate to be paid on the one hand and the public advantage of a proposed improvement on the other, and I cannot help thinking that a body like the service franchise holders would be a body who, without having a share in the burden imposed, would be gainers by increased expenditure. A body benefiting from an expenditure which bearing no share of the cost is hardly a body capable of judicially pronouncing on the wisdom of that expenditure. I regret that in regard to the Convener of the Council a system has been adopted which is not Scotch in its character. The plan of allowing a County Council to elect a Convener from outside its own ranks will, I venture to think, be held in Scotland to savour too much of the aldermanic system. We in

our Scotch Town Councils have found great advantage in the fact that whenever a man—even if he happens to be outside the Council—is singled out by the respect in which he is held by his fellow citizens for the position of Provost, he has to go through the ordeal of election to the Town Council, and has to gain some experience of the working of the Council before he is called on to preside over its deliberations. I think it would be no less an advantage to require those who aspire to be Conveners of the County Council to acquire similar experience in the first instance. And now I come to, perhaps, the most debated question in connection with this matter, and that is the question as to the control of the County Police. I for one think that the Government has adopted an extremely wise plan. I entirely differ from those who hold that an elected County Council should have entire control over the police of the county. I know that from a theoretical point of view something may be said for this. It may be said that it is desirable in this matter that the counties should be exactly assimilated to the boroughs, but when we look at it from a practical point of view the first question which it appears to me we have to ask is, what is the main duty which the police have to discharge. Is it their main duty to carry out the regulations of the County Council, or is it their main duty to enforce the laws of the Imperial Parliament? If it be their main duty to enforce the laws of the Imperial Parliament, then it seems to me that the first question we have to ask is, what administration of the police will most effectually conduce to the laws of Parliament being carried out. I am prepared to admit that the ground on which I support this position is the great difficulty that might arise in certain crofter counties, on account of the agrarian question. I believe that in many of the crofter counties there is a widespread feeling that the police ought not to assist in evictions, or, as the people say, ought not to assist in collecting the landlords' rent. This error arises from their thinking that the police do in their case what they do not do elsewhere. They overlook the fact that if a man takes another's property —say his umbrella—the police enforce its restoration. But I am not content with the argument from such an analogy. I wish to bring before the House the absolute absurdity of the position in which we should be left supposing the view to which I have alluded should be assented to. The result would be that the police would be obliged to protect the tenant in his holding, in which case the landlord would get no rent whatever, while the tenant would be supported in the peaceful occupation of the holding of which he would enjoy all the benefits while paying nothing. If you create a system of that sort you will be handing over to the tenants the whole of the benefits derivable from the land occupied and taking away from the landlord the whole of the advantages he ought to enjoy as owner of the property. With reference to the finances of this scheme I feel assured that the Scotch people generally will not only rejoice that the large amount of £171,000 is going to the relief of school fees, but will specially rejoice at the manner in which the money is to be applied. No form of relief could be more satisfactory than that which gives free education in the first, second, and third standards, and what is done beyond this grant is of very great importance, because those who cannot pay the fees in the higher standards are to be relieved of the odious obligation of going to the Parochial Authorities to get the fees paid. No one taking an interest in philanthropic movements in Scotland can have failed to notice that this application to the Parochial Authorities for relief from school fees has often led to people being pauperised who would not otherwise have gone upon the Poors Rate. Having been led to obtain this form of relief they have the less hesitation in applying for it for other purposes. With regard to the grant of £30,000 for the reduction of rates in the Highlands, I think there will be a very unfavourable opinion in regard to that proposal throughout most parts of Scotland. If a grant of this sort were the best form of relieving the extreme proverty of the Highlands, I think the general feeling in Scotland would be that the expenditure ought to be made out of the Imperial taxation and not from a purely Scotch fund. There are other purposes to which this £30,000

might be applied. It might be applied to giving further relief of school fees or local rates all over Scotland, that there is a strong claim to further relief from local rates is clear. The amount to be given to the Local Authorities is only equal to the grant Scotland formerly enjoyed; but there is this difference—the old grants were constantly increasing and the expenditure was constantly advancing, whereas the new revenue to be handed over will be a constantly contracting amount. But notwithstanding my criticisms on the proposals of the Government, I think that, on the whole, we have to thank them for a measure at once so broad, so bold, and so liberal in character. I, for one, feel that the advantages of such a measure cannot be weighed by the mere improvements that may take place in the business management of county affairs. It seems to me that the advantage is far greater and of far more national importance than a mere administrative advantage of this sort. The chief gain we make is this: that our people will be able to learn political lessons, which may often be best learnt when experiments are tried in their own immediate neighbourhoods. I cannot but feel that every measure of this sort by which we extend local self-government in our counties is adding to the security of our Empire by promoting the education and increasing the ability for government of those masses of the people on whom the safety and prosperity of the Empire depend.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I had no intention of taking part in this debate, which is practically a Committee stage debate, and not a debate on the Second Reading of the Bill before the House; but I think I may be permitted to say a word or two on the financial aspects of the measure. There will not be much interest taken in it in Scotland unless it is materially modified, and increased power given to the County Councils. If this be not done, instead of being beneficial to Scotland, the Bill will be the reverse. It is proposed to put an end to the Commissioners of Supply. Now, I assert that the Commissioners of Supply, have, unlike the Irish Grand Juries, never been accused of anything like jobbery. On the contrary, they have performed their functions well and economically, and I hardly think it likely that the new body will be either so moderate or so economical. If you want to have, as we ought to have, full control in the counties as we now have in the burghs, give us something in the shape of local government that is worth having, and do not throw us a skeleton for us to clothe. If the Bill is to be worth anything it can only be made so by increasing the powers of the County Council. You ought to attach the administration of the Poor Law and national elementary education to the functions of the County Councils. All the rating bodies ought to be in the County Councils and Divisional Committees, and in that way we might have something like uniform rating, instead of having a twopenny rate in one parish and a six-and-eightpenny rate in another. In the northern counties you ought to give the County Councils powers as to fish harbours and piers and tramways, and other means of developing the resources of the country. If you give powers of this kind you will add very much to the value of the County Councils. I think, moreover, that the Lord Advocate might have considered the whole question of the Highlands, and should have separated the Highland portions of the counties into counties or districts of their own. Until you do that there will be little chance of the Highlands being properly represented in the Councils. At the present time the Highlands are very badly treated. There is no exception to this in my own county. There is the Isle of Stroma attached to the county of Caithness, and although the people there have been paying road-rates for a number of years, not a single road has been made or supported by those rates on the whole island. There are 300 ratepayers on that island, all of whom are compelled to pay those rates, and there are no roads whatever except the pathways the people have made for themselves. There was one very important point introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling. burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) who suggested, on behalf of the Liberal Party, a measure of a much more reactionary character than the Tories dare put forward. In fact, the Government measure is much more liberal than the one suggested by the right hon. Gentleman. He proposed that the burden which until now has been placed on

land should be transferred—that is to say, that half should rest on land and the other half on the occupier. The proposal of the Government is that you should take an average of five years, and then stereotype it upon the land. You are to follow the lines of the Act of 1845 with regard to the poor rates, and the lines of the Act of 1872 with regard to Education. Until those years the burdens were upon the land; then one half was placed on the occupier, and one half on the landlord. The Act of 1872 placed the charge for education, which had hitherto been on the landlord, on the unfortunate occupier. Now, my hon. Friend objects that you are again carrying out that course by placing one-half at once on the occupier, of course covering the existing leases. But then there are a great many year-to-year tenancies, and these individuals would not have their rents reduced by the extra rate put on. I think the wisest course would be to allow the rate to remain still upon the landlord. The Lord Advocate laughs at that idea. Well, I do not, because ultimately the rate will come upon the landlord. I think it would be unfair, it would be a fraud upon the ratepayers to take the burden from one class and to place it upon another, without giving them compensation. It would be relieving the landlords at the expense of the tenants. One by one all the burdens of the land have been placed upon the tenants, and we are thinking of beginning to change it. I see the right hon. Gentleman wishes to continue the bad old plan. The question of the police has been raised, and the Secretary for Ireland has frankly stated they are taking the power of the police from the County Council, and placing it in the hands of an absolute majority, composed of the Sheriff of the County, and a number of the Commissioners of Supply. As far as the crofters, are concerned I think such a course is wholly unwarranted. The fact of the matter is, in no country in the world does the policeman occupy the same position as the policeman in the Highland country. He is looked upon there as the friend of the people generally. As far as the crofters are concerned, there is very little work for the policemen to do. In the crofter districts the policeman occupies a position unparalleled; he is municipal officer, judge, jury, and executioner. There is no place in the world where the sympathy is so great between the police and the people as in the crofter districts. But the proposed change would be rather a serious matter. Take my own county, for instance. You are going to take away the powers of the three boroughs. There is the Town Council, there is the Royal burgh of Wick, which for centuries has had its own police, there is the Parliamentary police borough, for which there is a special Act, and there are also the Police Commissioners of Thurso. These authorities will cease, and I am rather afraid there may be friction when the new police authorities are established. I am not apt to advocate anything on Conservative lines, but I think that the case of some of the old burghs of Scotland, which have had control of their police for centuries, might be considered. Of course, if the new proposal has efficiency and economy to recommend it, then it may be defensible. But there are other points on which I should like to say a word or two. The first proposal is to stereotype this £30,000 for the relief of the local taxation of the Highlands and Islands. As representative of a constituency about to be favoured by you, I strongly oppose that proposal. I trust that the £30,000 will follow the other sum, and go to make the Fifth Standard free. If you are to have education free, apply it to all the standards, and then you will benefit the crofters. By the present system you do not benefit them, but I will tell you whom you do benefit—the landlords and the lessees of deer forests and the tenants of shooting farms. These are classes of men with whom I have little sympathy, and whom I do not want to benefit in the slightest degree. Now take an illustration of my own. I bring before you the facts of a Royal Commission composed of landlords, and they have given in their Report on the highlands and islands. Now, take two parishes in Sutherlandshire, two in Invernessshire, and one in Rosshire, as typical of the highlands. Of those four parishes the rental was roughly £29,954. Of that amount £19,333 was paid by 51 tenants—15 of them being tenants of deer forests, and 36 of them shooting lessees. The remainder of the £29,000 was paid by

the increases and other ratable value, the crofters, 2,090 in number, paying £7,800. So that practically the crofters pay one quarter and the others three-quarters, and the advantage goes, therefore, to the large farmers and shooting tenants. If it had been reversed and the crofters had got three-quarters, I might have supported your proposal, but the crofter only gets 6d. to every 2s. the others obtain. It would suit the crofter very much better not to have to pay the school rate, and he would have been very much more benefited had you freed education to a greater extent. As to one or two other points, I think when once you permit School Boards to teach dogmatic theology, and allow the catechism to be taught, there is no reason why the Roman Catholics or the Episcopalians should not have their catechism taught. I for one should be glad if the Scotch people could be taught a little consistency on this point, and should any constituency turn me away for the views I hold on this subject, well then they must turn me away. We will be able in Committee to eliminate from this Bill its Conservative elements, and make it, as many Conservative Bills have been made by Radicals in this House, a fairly workable measure.

*SIR ARCHIBALD ORR EWING (Dumbarton): I rise for the purpose of expressing satisfaction with the remarks of the hon. Gentleman (Dr. Clark) upon the Commissioners of Supply. But I must confess that the end of his speech was not so pleasant as the beginning. He differed very much from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) who began in a high falutin style about this being a skeleton of a Bill, which would require to be filled up to be made useful. But there was nothing outrageous in his proposals, except that a married woman should have the same power as her husband in voting for the Council. Dual control has not succeeded in Ireland, and I do not think it will succeed in Scotland. With many points of the right hon. Gentleman's speech I agree. I think when we are doing so much for education, we might do more. Here is £170,000 coming from the Imperial Revenue. What makes it more sacred than if it were contributed from the rates? If this money were put into a general fund it would save the rates, but being abstracted from the general fund it increases the rates. I feel inclined, now we have adopted this principle (to which I have hitherto been opposed, because it was intended to be confined to schools under the School Boards) to go further. Denominational schools were not to receive a portion of this money. I oppose that on principle, for it would be most unjust to the Episcopalians and the Roman Catholics that their schools should not share merely because they are not supported by the rates. If you are going to introduce this great system, which I believe will be of very great benefit to the country, if you desire to make it most truly and generally beneficial, we must not stop in this half-way course, but go the whole hog. Mr. Speaker, I agree with the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) that we should make a distinction in the county assessments. At present the landlords pay all the rates; and it is proposed that we should stereotype the rates upon them for the last five years, and that anything expended beyond should be paid jointly by the tenants and landlords. Well, there seems to be some amount of fairness in that, but I would like to point out to you the circumstances of Dumbartonshire. The rate of that county for present purposes is 2¾d. Supposing there is an increase of ¼d., you charge the eighth of a penny. Is it worth the trouble of collection? Could we not do it in the manner suggested by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) and maintain the great principle that taxation should go with representations, making the tenant pay one half, but giving him the power to claim from the landlord that portion until his lease is out. Just now we are invoking a new principle, of which many improper uses may be made. I must say that I hold by the principle which has been announced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirlingshire, and I hope the Government will take into consideration the suggestion he has made. But my principal object in speaking to-night is with reference to my own county. I congratulate the Lord Advocate on the way in which his Bill has been received at meetings of Commissioners of Supply throughout Scotland, but I must say that the County of Dumbarton in his Bill seems to be

badly treated. In the 14th Clause there is power given to the Commissioners to make such alterations in the boundaries of the parishes as they may think fit. Well, the county I represent may be in a very peculiar position. Some 400 years ago the parishes of Kirkintilloch and Cumbernauld were, by the influence of a noble Lord, taken from Stirlingshire and added to Dumbartonshire, from which they were four miles separated, merely because that noble Lord wished to be under one sheriffdom. But in lieu of these two parishes, seven parishes were taken from Dumbartonshire and added to Stirlingshire. These are the parishes of Fintry, Balfron, Killearn, Drymen, Buchanan, Strathblane, and Campsie. Now, it is not to be denied that these very parishes were contiguous to Stirlingshire, and come under the operation of this Bill, and, therefore, there will be no power on the part of the Commissioners to give to Dumbartonshire what belonged to it 400 years ago. In 1503, the Scottish Parliament bestowed upon Dumbartonshire these seven parishes and took away the two. But unfortunately in 1509 Parliament repealed the Act of 1503, and since that time we have been as we are. What I say is, that if we are to lose those two parishes, taking away a fourth part of the population and an 18th part of the assessment, certainly the Lord Advocate ought to do us the justice of restoring to us the seven parishes given to us in 1503, in lieu of the two parishes taken away from us.

*Mr. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, North East): I confess, the more I study these Bills, and listen to the speeches by which they are explained and defended on the Government side of the House, the more my own mind tends to dwell on the shadowy side of the picture, and I desire to say something to bring out the great shortcomings and defects in the scheme which has been laid before us. No doubt, we may congratulate ourselves that the Government has at last approached this subject in a serious spirit, and to a certain extent on comprehensive lines. It so happens that in the social and political history of Scotland the burghs have received necessary reforms, in a much larger degree than the country districts have done. For a long time the government of the rural districts was in the hands of the landed gentry. Under the circumstances of those times it was perfectly natural and right that it should be so, and, speaking generally, I think the people of Scotland will admit that they have done th eir duty faithfully and well. As towns grew within the bounds of the county, municipal privileges were freely accorded to them, and that from very early times. Whenever a considerable town arose, it was either by Charter or otherwise, erected into a burgh of one kind or another, and in later times obtained a private Act of Parliament, while lastly there came the Police Acts, which afforded facilities for the inhabitants of towns associating themselves together to obtain the degree of municipal government they required. But the counties have been left somewhat in the background, and I am glad the Government have at length reconsidered the necessity of introducing some principle of reform into their administration also. It is true that this is not the first step in that direction. For example the Education Act was an admission of the principle that the schools should not be left under the control of the heritors and the Church, but that they should be placed under School Boards elected on a popular basis. The Royal Act of 1878 also altered the administration of roads, which was to a very large extent popularized; while now, to complete the scheme, the present Bill is laid before us, claiming to be a thorough and a comprehensive measure for dealing with the subject. I remember that the Lord Advocate, in his able and lucid speech in introducing this Bill, laid down three conditions which a scheme of this kind ought to fulfil. He said it ought to be distinctively Scotch; he claimed that the scheme, whatever other merits or defects it had, would be found to be logical and coherent, and he deprecated that a subject of this kind should be dealt with piecemeal, contending that it ought to be thought out from beginning to end. Now, Sir, I think it must have been the rhetorical dexterity of the Lord Advocate's which led him to lay down these conditions, and to claim that they had been fulfilled. They are, indeed, most reasonable conditions, but in every one of them I think I shall be able to shew that this Bill is conspicuously deficient. It is not

distinctively Scotch, for some of its best and some of its worst points are obviously borrowed from the English measure. We should never have heard of the device of a Joint Committee of the Commissioners of Supply, and the County Council, if it had not been invented by the ingenuity of the President of the Local Government Board. On the other hand, if you come to the merits of the Bill, I very much question whether we should have had under all the circumstances of the case, the popular franchise on which the County Council is rested, had it not been that the precedent of the English Bill was one which the Government could not resist. Therefore I say that the Bill is not distinctively Scotch. I think I shall also be able to show that it very unfortunately fails in comprehensiveness in dealing with the whole subject. It also conspicuously fails in being neither logical nor coherent. It would not I think have been difficult to make the Local Government Bill for Scotland a much more satisfactory measure than it is. The difficulties which exist in England have practically been utilized as an excuse for the defects of this Bill, whereas these difficulties do not exist in Scotland, or do not exist to nearly the same extent. The main difficulties in England for producing a complete Bill are such as these—that you have Local Authorities like the Unions and the Local Government Board Districts, which overlap each other, and also overlap the boundaries of the counties, and do not even cover the whole area and extent of the counties. Now, in Scotland we have no divisions of that kind. We have only two well understood and historical divisions to deal with—the county and the parish. I apprehend that if this task had been gone about on right principles there would not have been any insuperable difficulty in forming a scheme which would have combined in a satisfactory manner all the local government functions both of the country and the parish. Now, Sir, when you read the clauses of the Bill you will find that it hardly pretends to be a Local Government Bill. What it pretends to be is a County Government Bill, and in Scotland that is a very different thing. There, as in many other places, the functions of Local Government are divided and distributed into two areas—one large and one smaller—one being the parish and the other the county. That is a position which exists in a great many other countries. It exists in America, where in various States they have the functions of the township and also of the county. In some of the States the principal duties of the Local Government are done in the township, which may be compared to the parish; in other States they are done in the county. In Scotland it happens that the greater part of the Local Government is done not in the counties, but in the parishes. In the parishes we deal with education; in the parishes we deal with the affairs of the poor; in the area of the county we deal with the subjects of police and justice —of course I do not forget that it is only the administrative functions of County Government that are treated in this Bill. Now, Sir, I am willing to apply any standard of Government you may think fit to test whether the most important part of the work of Local Government in Scotland is done in the area of the county or the area of the parish, and I contend that, whatever standard is applied, it will be found that the most important part of Scotch Local Government is at the present time carried out in the parish. I say that, not in the least desiring that this should be a Parish Bill, instead of being, as it is, a County Bill. But it ought to be a Bill which honestly and fairly embraces the whole county and the parish, and which dovetails the duties of the parish into those of the county, and so produces a much more symmetrical and useful whole. Take the standard of money. If you add together both the County Rate proper and the Police Rate, it may be fair on an average to state it at 3d. in the pound instead of—as the hon. Member for Dumbarton stated it—at only $2\frac{3}{4}$d. I put it at 3d. in the pound, whereas the whole rates paid by the inhabitants of a county in Scotland probably approach the sum of 3s. I have not yet obtained the detailed Return which I moved for, and therefore am not in a position to give the House a precise idea in money of the comparative importance of the functions dealt with in this Bill. In addition to that you have the road rates which you may put at about 6d. in

the pound, and thus you have 3d. and 6d.—together 9d.—raised in the area of the county as compared with a total of nearly 3s. Again, while the objects to which the county rates are applied are no doubt matters of importance and utility, they certainly, if we may judge of the interest that is taken in them in many counties, are not to be compared in public importance to such subjects as education and the care of the poor; there are many counties in which representatives of the tenants for road purposes can hardly be got to take the trouble to fulfil their share in the business at all. If we take the standard of time, the tax on the time of Members of School Boards and Parochial Boards and compare that with the time spent by the Commissioners of Supply, you will see that the time occupied by the former is very much greater. I will try yet another standard, and that is the interest taken in the business. The interest in the parish business is often very considerable in the rural districts, whereas the interest they take in the business conducted by the Commissioners of Supply and the Road Trustees is practically nothing at all. You may apply the same standard to the interest created by this Bill in the country. The people see that this is a Bill which only deals with roads and with the functions of the Commissioners of Supply; and I am bound to say that as far as my experience goes this Bill, which was described by the Secretary for Ireland as a great administrative revolution, is a measure which does not excite the very smallest interest in Scotland. Such, then, is the scope of the Bill as to which the Lord Advocate said that he deprecated a piece-meal dealing with this question. It is a Bill which he contends does not deal piece-meal with the subject, and yet it is confined, with a single exception, to the duties of the Commissioners of Supply and the Road Trustees, and makes only one excursion into a different sphere, and that we find in the Parochial Boards Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Ireland, who defends this scheme, expressly based his defence of the Bill on the fact that the public opinion of Scotland would not have been satisfied if the parish, as well as the country, had not been dealt with. I entirely demur to the idea that the Parochial Boards Bill in the least degree satisfies the demand of the country for a comprehensive general measure. In the first place, it is based on an entirely vicious principle. It introduces a franchise of a new kind—namely, the election of a body partly by owners and partly by occupiers, and it only covers a certain portion of the duties that are performed in the parishes, while it takes no account whatever of the equally important functions of education. Now, Sir, before I pass to the ideas as to this Bill which we on this side of the House would desire to see carried out. I propose to refer for a moment to the manner in which the business of the county, small as it is, is to be dealt with by this Bill. The functions of the Commissioners of Supply are transferred to the new County Councils, and at first sight we might have thought this was a thoroughly liberal and progressive measure. But when we look into the question we see that the only duties of any considerable importance discharged by the Commissioners of Supply are the control of the police and the incurring of capital expenditure, and, instead of those important powers being frankly handed over to the County Councils and Commissioners of Supply, are kept up in a Joint Committee for those two purposes. No doubt the rates in regard to police and capital expenditure are paid by owners exclusively, but I, for one, have not the smallest objection to those rates being divided, on condition that the Commissioners of Supply disappear. It is a great mistake to suppose that at present the rates are paid by the persons who have the government of the county in their hands. The want of representation on the part of the feuars is an evil which is increasing every day. A man requires to have a house valued at £200 before he has any say whatever in the disposal of the money supposed to be paid by the owners. In a village like Bothwell, in my own constituency, you find numbers of good houses inhabited by respectable people, but not one of the houses is valued at £200 a year, and therefore not one of the owners has a word to say in the County Government of Lanarkshire. However, I say by all means let us divide the rate, on condition that you

get rid of the Commissioners of Supply. But this question of the police is one of principle far exceeding in importance the mere question of the money involved. In the Scottish burghs, where you have thoroughly democratic constituencies, the police are governed and administered by the ratepayers with the most perfect satisfaction to all the inhabitants and with the best results to public security. I entirely repudiate the idea put forward by the Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Balfour) that the question of police stands in this respect on a different footing to the other public interests entrusted to these bodies. The question of public health is no less a matter of Imperial interest than the question of police administration; and so is the education question, the administration of which you entrust to popularly-elected bodies. I may be asked in what direction I should have gone in dealing with the question of Local Government. Well, Sir, I should have begun with the parish. I think the Government are bound to take the parish into account in a very different sense than they are doing, by proposing to establish Parochial Boards with a franchise which dissociates and dissevers the parish from the rest of the economy of the county. If you had one franchise for both the parish and the county you would find it easy to draft a scheme rising from the lower grade of the parish to the higher grade of the county. It would then be unnecessary to create separate bodies for dealing with capital and expenditure. The questions of education and the poor might be left to the parish, and a certain check might be put upon parochial expenditure by imposing the necessity of referring questions of borrowing to the County Council. In the same way I should be perfectly willing to put a strict limit on the borrowing powers of the County Council itself. The check, however, ought not to be the creation of another body, but the supervision of a proper authority. If you had this gradation from the parish to the county you could have an authority within the boundaries of the county competent both to deal with primary education and with technical and higher education. There might possibly be an appeal to the County Council in such questions as the dismissal of a schoolmaster, and the Council might also have power to extend the area of rating where it was thought necessary. I agree also with my right hon. Friend that the question of the administration of justice ought not to be excluded from this Bill. The powers of the Scottish Justices in civil and criminal cases are of a most limited kind, whilst their powers in licensing cases are of a kind which excites a very serious and deep interest in the counties. Why should not the model of the burgh have been followed in this matter? I should be sorry to say anything which would detract from the dignity of the office of Justice of the Peace, but I submit that if those Magistrates were elected from the large area of the County Council by their fellow citizens to discharge similar judicial duties to those now exercised by the Justices and by the Magistrates of burghs and at the same time to exercise the power of licensing, their dignity would be at least equal to that of the present Justices of the Peace, and we should be as likely to get the best men for the work. In our present system of Local Government in Scotland there is no function that excites more interest than that of licensing, and I think the Government have shown an unfortunate timidity in not dealing with the subject. I should have liked to see the plan of representative Local Government adopted in this matter of licensing. If it is not, a much more extreme remedy is certain to be adopted before long. I do not think we have had time to consider the proposals respecting free education which the Government have disclosed to-night. I confess, on a cursory consideration of them, I see no reason for stopping at the three elementary standards, and I see very considerable danger in making the higher standards a matter of eleemosynary favour on the part of the managers. That objection appears to be particularly strong when we see that if the whole of the Probate Duty were given, it would be enough to wipe out this invidious difference, and to give free education all round. I may say I am far from being insensible to the very great importance of establishing a County Council upon a popular franchise; but I think the proposal is spoilt by the exclusion of those who are qualified by the service franchise. It would

not be difficult to show that in one shape or another the rates press upon the means of subsistence of the labourers, who vote in virtue of the service franchise, as well as upon other citizens. I am not insensible either to the importance of the principle of free education, which we on this side of the House have earnestly advocated for some years. I trust the opportunity will be taken of improving the Bill in other respects. I think our objections go deep, and that the more consideration that is given to the measure in the country, the greater will be the disappointment if this is not made a really comprehensive Bill, and one likely to have some reasonable degree of finality. I believe it is still quite possible to remedy the greater part of the defects of the Bill. A few strokes of the pen would do away with those Commissioners of Supply, who my right hon. Friend knows very well cannot survive for many years. Is it wise to keep up such an excrescence as a target for agitation, and as a source for discontent in an administrative measure of this kind? In the same way it would also be easy to establish your Parochial Council on a similar franchise as your County Council, and to confer upon it the other duties which belong to parishes—the control of education as well as the care of the poor. If that were done, the other links which would connect the parish with the Council would be sure to follow. We have seen most admirable examples of the working of Local Government in the burghs of Scotland. Here we have an opportunity of applying the same principles on a wider field, and with still more varied interests and duties than can be found within the boundaries of a burgh. I am sure the men of the counties are equally well-fitted to perform the duties as the citizens of burghs. I must earnestly protest that the Bill in its present form is not distinctively Scotch, is not logical and coherent, and, above all, that it is eminently a Bill which deals with the subject in a piecemeal manner. I ask the House whether I have made good the indictment, which, if true, it is easy to put right. In any event, I hope that no considerations of mere antagonism will prevent the Government giving fair consideration to what we have advanced on this subject.

Mr. D. Crawford

*Mr. MARK STEWART (Kircudbright): There are two Amendments on the Paper. The one standing in the name of the hon. Member for Leith (Mr. Munro Ferguson) proposes to refer the Bill to a Committee of Scotch representatives. I certainly think that that is unnecessary, as to-night the Scotch Members may congratulate themselves that they have not been flooded out by English Members. The Scotch representatives have had the debate all to themselves, and judging from the appearance of the House now (10 o'clock) we are likely to continue in that happy condition until 12 o'clock. The second Amendment stands in the name of the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken (Mr. D. Crawford), but which the hon. Member has not thought fit to press. The hon. Gentleman is accustomed to deal with subjects connected with burgh and municipal matters as a great authority, but we cannot congratulate him upon the view he has taken of this Bill. He appears to shrink from moving his Amendment. There are many points in that Amendment which I think worthy of consideration, but the hon. Gentleman did not make any complete protest in their favour. The hon. Member said that this was not a Local Government Bill, but a County Government Bill, and his main contention was that the rates which are imposed on property, to defray the expenses of a parish, are very much heavier than those imposed on a county. As illustrations he mentioned the education and poor rates. No doubt they are two heavy impositions, but the hon. Member forgets that the Government pay half the cost of the police, one-half the cost of the lunatic paupers, and a considerable grant in aid of medical relief, and he ignored all county assessment under the Contagious Diseases (Animal) Act. The hon. Member found great fault because the Commissioners of Supply are to be perpetuated. What is the real objection to this perpetuation? One of the objects of the Bill is to make the Joint Committee, which imposes the rate on the county, stronger than it otherwise would be. In addition to the seven Commissioners of Supply on the Joint Committee, you have four Commissioners of Supply told off to assist the County Councillors in their administrative work, and although this may operate somewhat hardly in some

counties which have not the advantage of permanent Chairmen, for example, as is the case in my county, a Chairman of roads will be found to work exceedingly well in the case of the majority of counties in beginning the work of the administration. From some points of view it might be an advantage to go outside and choose a man to act as Chairman; a fit person might be abroad, and so unable personally to contest a seat on the Council, or he might shrink from undergoing the arduous work entailed in a contest. The great objection to the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Lanark (Mr. Crawford) is that it did not attempt to give to the discussion that wide and comprehensive bearing which the Lord Advocate laid down when he introduced the Bill, and dealt with it on wide and comprehensive lines. He said it must be distinctly Scotch, and this I maintain it is, and that it must excite the popular interest. Judging from the interest which has been shown in it at every political meeting held in Scotland since the 9th of April, when it was introduced, I think it has proved of great popular interest to the whole country. On the whole, too, I think it must be admitted that the measure is coherent and logical; something may be left to be desired, but then you cannot drive six omnibuses abreast through Temple Bar, and if the Bill had been weighted with licensing, education and other matters, as some have suggested, it would be impossible to run the Bill through this Session. But now I hope, with the assistance of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, we shall get the Bill passed in a form that will be acceptable generally to the people of Scotland. I should like to say a word or two on points which have not, I think, been much alluded to. It is difficult in discussing a Bill of this kind to keep to a Second Reading Debate, and avoid going into details. There is a point in reference to the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act which I think ought to be cleared up at once. I think it is by Section 28 of this Bill that it is provided that burghs returning a Member to Parliament, or burghs forming part of a group returning a Member, are still to have their own Local Authority under the Act I have mentioned. This, I think, will be altered when the Bill gets into Committee. In my own county, for instance, Kirkcudbright is a small burgh of 3,000 inhabitants, but inasmuch as it is one of a group that returns a Member, it would have a separate authority under the Contagious Diseases Animals Act, and thus might be a great hindrance to the carrying out of the Act effectually over the whole county. Then there is the greatest possible laxity in administering the Sanitary Acts and in the duties that should be performed by medical officers, and, unless in the administration of these Acts compulsory powers are given, in this respect the Bill will be so much waste paper. I may mention that in the creation of new officers there is much jealousy on the ground of increased expense, and I hope in Committee a rigorous scrutiny will be exercised in this matter. A word upon Clause 30—the clause to stereotype the county assessments on a five years' average. It is a clause that few people like, and I think it would be desirable to get rid of it, and I think the suggestion of the right hon. Member for Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannermann) is not an unwise one, dividing the assessment between occupier and proprietor, giving exceptions to tenants under lease, so that there may not be any old assessments imposed on them. It is but a small rate upon the whole of Scotland, and in my own County the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright would not on a five years' average exceed one penny and 1-86th of a penny, or 34-32nds of a penny in the £; but this is, I believe, the lowest in Scotland. This brings me to the service franchise. We know the great difficulty of collecting small sums from small ratepayers, and although I thoroughly believe in the principle laid down by the Government, that service franchise holders shall contribute to the rates, I am not sure that this, if it is a safeguard in 1889, would not be knocked off in 1890, and I am not at all sure that the Government will then have got rid of the difficulty. I shall hope to see this so amended in Committee that service franchise holders shall be able freely to exercise their power of voting. The question of audit is not mentioned in the Bill. It is an important matter, and I cannot help thinking that the auditor ought

to be appointed by the Government, and, in my opinion, it is very desirable that the auditor should have his head-quarters in Edinburgh instead of London. There are many questions that would come before this official only interesting to select Members and Scotch Councillors, who are far more often in their native capital than in London, and it would be a distinct advantage that the auditor should have his offices in Edinburgh. It might cause a little difficulty, perhaps, to the Government in London, but it would simplify matters very much in the North. There is another very small matter, and I do not lay stress upon it because it is rather a matter of sentiment, and that is to make the date of meeting the 30th April, the date familiar to all Scotchmen in connection with the meetings of Commissioners of Supply. The education question is, without doubt, a very important question, and one that I have always looked at boldly, knowing that it must come up for decision; and I rather think I was the only Scotch Conservative Member who had the courage to give it a prominent place in the election addresses of 1885. I have long favoured the principle which the Government have recognized, and I thank them, for giving £171,000 to free education. But I do not want to stop there. So long as his child is compelled to pass through school before he can be allowed to earn his daily bread, a poor man has no cause to complain, but he has a fair cause for complaint when the obligation of payment is added. Free education will make education more popular. Our educational system comes short of success because of the growing repugnance among the poor, among the labouring class, to send their children to school. I can speak with experience from 1873 as Chairman of a large local School Board, having to provide for the education of some 600 children in an agricultural population, that there is the greatest difficulty in securing the regular attendance of children at school. We in our county spend much money in trying to do our duty, but we find ourselves helpless. It is only when we have a very strong case, indeed, that the Sheriff will support us, and this is soon found out by parents who avoid sending their children to school. I think Members who know the requirements of the far North may rejoice at the Government proposal, but whatever opposition there may be to allocating £30,000 to the Highlands, I am sure we stand in need of assistance in the South, and if not wanted there as we have been told to-night, by all means let us have it. If the Parliamentary register is taken absolutely as the basis of registration for County Council voting purposes, then you may have separate registers for School Boards, Parochial Boards, and County Councils, besides Parliamentary Elections, but in small areas it would be less expense to adopt the plan followed, I am told, in School Board elections of even large extent, by which the Inspector of Poor Law or the Returning Officer takes the valuation roll and ticks off upon that those persons who are on the School Board register. Of course, you may have the difficulty of finding the name you want on the valuation roll: and besides there may be a double qualification; but, considering that the elections are always held on one day throughout the county, I think that need not trouble us very much. Then, again, it is said to be a great stigma affixed to a man to be struck off the roll as a person who has not paid his rates, but ever since I can remember, it has been the practice to post a list of those who neglect to pay rates on the church doors, and I only wish this was regarded as a stigma, as we should not then see the same names appearing so often. If these Bills pass in their present form, you must have three separate registers for local purposes, and difficulties and expense will be greatly increased. To find the value of all the service occupiers houses, you must wade through the list of those who do not pay County rates, and you must also find out all the defaulters of poor rates for the Parochial Board Franchise. All these points will be thrashed out in Committee. If hon. Members do not get all they want in the Bill, neither can they expect all they want this year put into it. When the rates are consolidated matters will be much simplified. There are parochial matters in some parishes, such as drainage, gas and water supply, which it is objected should not be handed over to the control of the County Council as a petition from Girvan, which I hold in my hand, testifies; but, I maintain that though it

may seem hard to the locality, yet it is the best plan that can be devised, namely, making your County Council the Local Authority for all purposes, and uniting your smaller bodies to it, so making your legislation logical and coherent.

*MR. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland): After the very clear statement we had from the Lord Advocate in introducing the Bills, the people of Scotland have had an unusually good opportunity of knowing what is before them, and of appreciating the Bills when they were published. Now, I have watched the attitude of the people of Scotland both in the county where I live and in the constituency I represent, and I may say the attitude has been that of perfect indifference and neglect, and a feeling of doubt is conspicuous as to whether it is worth while to alter existing arrangements to adopt a measure which effects so very few reforms. This attitude throughout the country is shared by the majority of Scotch Members. If we thought that the Bills represented the maximum of reform the present Government are willing to allow they would be rejected with scorn, and we would have nothing further to do with them, even if they passed; but the Bills are acceptable to us as a foundation upon which we hope to build up and establish a logical and consistent system of Local Government throughout Scotland. At the outset there are two great omissions from the Bill, omissions which have been noticed several times already, but are of such importance as to be insisted upon with a view to remedy. I refer to licensing and the necessity for further reform in dealing with the educational machinery of the country. We want in Scotland municipal reforms in counties as in towns. I only refer to education for a moment to say that I regard the great advantages which the larger burghs of Scotland possess in matters of education are due to the School Boards having control of a great number of schools where they are able to grade the scholars and so provide for elementary and higher education. I should like to see a measure of this kind entrusted to County Councils, general supervision in educational matters, and a power to restrict the number of superfluous offices the expense of which now falls on the county with no advantage to education. The most important duty that under the Bill will devolve upon the new County Council will be the management of roads; in fact the new County Council will, to a great extent, be very little more than a glorified Road Board. According to the plan of the Government the Councils will be elected from single-member constituencies throughout the country, and they are to deal with matters that have hitherto been administered by bodies which practically represent landlords exclusively. They are to represent owners of property and occupiers jointly. Now, throughout the debate, on the introduction of the Bill, the point more especially alluded to by the Lord Advocate and referred to by the Chief Secretary to-night was the fact that throughout Scotland the local rates are equally divided between occupiers and owners, and the system of the Government was justified on that foundation. Here, in this Bill, with the system of single-member constituencies and a very extended franchise, we shall have County Councils comprised exclusively of members elected by occupiers. I have no doubt, myself, that in the county in which I live, these members will be chosen, in many cases, by the occupiers, not from their own ranks, but from the members of the Commission of Supply, who have great experience, and are the best men the electors could find to represent the interest of the county on the new County Council. But, I submit, it is a matter well worthy of consideration, whether on the ground of fairly representing the two interests, it might not be worth while to have two member constituencies sending two members, one elected by the owners and one by the occupiers. I do not think there would be any dislike to that on the part of the people of Scotland; it would be an elective board the people of Scotland are accustomed to see, and they would deal with the matter fairly, the expense falling upon both classes. There is another matter that may be worth consideration; it would save expense in carrying out the elections. Every three years there is to be an election, and the expense falls upon the county, but if the areas were made larger, with good organization the expense might be considerably diminished. At present there are too many elections in the county, and the expense of conducting them is a

burden I should be glad to see reduced. I think the system of electing in single-member constituencies would work perfectly well in the great majority of counties, and the best men would be put on the County Council, yet in some places it will work unfairly to the owners. In some of the Northern counties there are very few people eligible for the position of County Councillors holding the position of owners, and the representation will consist almost exclusively of occupiers. In exceptional counties—in Sutherland, for instance—owners could not record more than one or two votes, and will practically have no representative on the Council. The principle of double members has been conceded by the Government, and I cannot for the life of me conceive why, having admitted the principle in connection with the Parochial Board elections, it should not be applied to County Councils where it is more defensible. In the matter of Parochial Boards, what we really want is a thoroughly improved School Board which will deal with the double matter—education in the parish and the administration of the Poor Law. A School Board elected on a wide franchise would recommend itself to the parish. When the Lord Advocate introduced these Bills he said half of the Parochial Boards would be elected by the owners and the other part by occupiers, and the reasons upon which he urged that are far more applicable to the county than the parish. Practical details in connection with this subject can be dealt with in the framing of the Valuation Roll. In that Roll in Scotland we have the name of the tenant and the owner and the amount of the rent paid, and that should be sufficient for all purposes. It ought to be made a thoroughly simple and useful Roll for all elections—Parliamentary, County Council, and School Board. I should like to see the one register for all these purposes. Of course, if we were to have owners and occupiers elected to the County Council, many of the difficulties urged on the other side about the retention of the Commissioners of Supply on the County Council to manage the police would disappear. There can be no doubt that if we had half the Council elected by owners and half elected by occupiers a proper Committee would be formed to deal with the police and other matters that the Government are unwilling to trust to the holders of the service franchise. It is proposed in the Bill to extend the franchise to all the householders, provided they are willing to pay their share of the county rate. But I notice that the first election is to take place in December, and that the clauses which especially guard this subject are not to come into operation until next year. There would, therefore, be nothing to prevent any ploughman in the service of a farmer from professing his willingness to become an elector now, and perhaps next year declining to pay his rate on going away, and never being heard of again. As to the Commissioners of Supply, so far as I know, their desire is to be abolished altogether. It will be absurd to retain them for the sole purpose of supplying seven members to sit with seven members of the County Council. I do not think the Commissioners will think it reasonable that they should be summoned once a year to sit on a Board that has no other earthly object than to select these seven members. They will not care to attend, and the result will be that the nomination of the seven will rest in the hands of one or two wire-pullers. When the Bill was introduced the Lord Advocate for the purpose of conciliating Scottish opinion brought out with a great flourish of trumpets that the Chairman was to enjoy the time-honoured name of "Convener of the County." I should imagine that the name could be applicable to the Chairman of the new Council, provided the old Convener of the County, the Chairman of the Commissioners of Supply were done away with. But that is not to be the case, and we are to have two of these Conveners. If the Lord Advocate will consent to abolish the Commissioners of Supply we shall have the one Convener of the County, the Chairman of the County Council, who, I hope, will be elected from the body of the County Council, and will not be a spurious, exotic, alderman imported from goodness knows where. As to the stereotyping of the County Rate I agree with the observation made that it would be desirable to fix the amount but not fix the rate. But this is a small matter, the amount varying from 2d. or 3d. downwards. I think the proposals of the right. hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) that the County Rate,

small as it is, should be divided between owners and occupiers, and that the occupier during existing leases should receive relief from his owner to the amount of that rate meets with general acceptance. It is desirable that the Scotch Members should express a decided opinion on this question of stereotyping the County Rate. Part of the rate consists of money borrowed and gradually repaid out of a Sinking Fund or by other means, and it is not desirable to stereotype this Sinking Fund, but it should be arranged that no more than a fair annuity should be imposed for ever on the County Rate. Then there is another burden that is borne by owners exclusively, and that is the road debt. I hope there is no desire on the part of the Government to perpetuate that. We are paying it off as fast as we can. It will be paid off in 50 years from the date of the commencement of the repayment; and it should be clear from the County Rate. As to the educational question, which has been brought up to-day for the first time, I was glad to hear the opinion expressed by the hon. Gentleman, the Member for Dumbartonshire, that the relief in aid of the school rates should extend a great deal further than the First, Second, and Third Standards. I think that those who, under the scheme of the Government, would be entitled to receive remission of fees in the higher standards would feel that the remission was due to their poverty and would dislike to receive it just as they dislike to receive poor relief. It would mark the children out from other scholars in the school and put them in an invidious position. I think the remissions should go beyond the Third Standard. They should go to the Sixth if it could be arranged. I note, with great satisfaction, the separation of Orkney and Shetland into two separate district counties for local purposes. I think as the Government have gone so far and have rightly gone so far, in separating two counties which have nine hours of sea voyage between them, and the inhabitants of which are distinct from each other in their habits and views, it would be desirable to create separate counties for the western islands. And, as a matter of detail, I would direct the attention of the Lord Advocate to the date of the election of the first County Councils. December is fixed in the Bill, but that is a very bad date for the islands in the North and West of Scotland. It is about the stormiest month which could have been chosen, and the difficulty of getting proper candidates to come forward, and of getting voters to go to the poll in that month will be very great. I trust, therefore, that the date will be altered. I would only like to say, in conclusion, that this is no Party matter. On other questions we are divided on both sides of the House, but I trust that all Scotch Members will meet together for the purpose of discussing this question on its merits. We have all a common interest in making the Local Government of Scotland as good as possible, and I think we may all unite in a friendly way, urging our own points, and begging the Government to give a candid consideration to such matters as may come up for discussion. We want to simplify the whole machinery of the Bill, and make it as easy to work as we can, and so as far as possible, perfect the Local Government of Scotland.

*MR. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): I rejoice very much that, unlike some of my hon. and right hon. Friends on this side of the House, I was not led away by the siren voice of the Lord Advocate when he introduced the Bill, and did not bound up at once and congratulate him on the immense amount of good the Scotch people were about to get. No doubt there is a substratum of good in the Bills, but there is nothing in them which should make one lose oneself in admiration. There is little in them to inspire the enthusiasm of the people of Scotland. There is much to be found fault with, and much that we may condemn. There is an old proverb which says that "If you Scratch a Russian you will find a Tartar," and certainly if you scratch the veneer of popular sentiment that surrounds these measures, you will find in them the good old Tory principle of distrust of the masses, and desire to keep the management of the counties in the hands of the landowners. The old ejaculation that "the earth is the laird's and the fulness thereof," is very well illustrated in many of the provisions of this Bill. Now, I regret that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland is not in his place, as I desire to make reference to some observations of his. I must say I am glad the right hon. Gentleman was

able to find leisure from the task of governing Ireland in order to devote a little time to the promotion—even from a Conservative point of view—of the self-government of his own country. It must have been a pleasant change to the right hon. Gentleman to leave off thinking of his battering rams in Ireland and to do something towards giving more self-government to Scotland. It was interesting to listen to the right hon. Gentleman urging the House to look at the Bills from the Scotch point of view, and one could not help reflecting that if he only acted on his own advice in dealing with Ireland things would be in a more satisfactory position in that country. It seems to me that if he carried some of these sentiments over to the Chief Secretary's Lodge and applied them to his government of Ireland it would be a great advantage. The right hon. Gentleman took up my right hon. Friend beside me (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) very shortly because he ventured to say that his objection to the Parochial Boards Bill was of a strong character. He complained that for my right hon. Friend to take up a hostile attitude towards the third Bill was in violation of the promises he had made as to the manner in which he proposed to deal with the Bills as a whole. Now I deny that entirely. The Parochial Board Bill rests on a very different footing from all these other Bills. It rests on what we believe to be a bad foundation, on the foundation of a division of of representation between the owner and the occupier. The right hon. Gentleman said that was a very natural foundation, as it was found to work well under the Roads and Bridges Act; but he surely might have found a precedent in the School Board elections. There is no division between owners and occupiers there, and it seems to me it would have been better to have adopted that system as a type rather than fall back on the Roads and Bridges Act. Then, the right hon. Gentleman was exceedingly wrath with my right hon. Friend for suggesting that it was possible that elected magistrates might be found to do the work very well in the counties of Scotland. Elected magistrates are not to be found in burghs only; they are known to the counties, too, for many of the Borough Magistrates are regularly included in the Commission of the Peace for the county. Then the right hon. Gentleman fell foul of my right hon. Friend for suggesting that probably occupiers and owners might divide the county rate between them. It seems to me that the incidence of the county rate is a small matter, and the owners of Scotland need not be afraid whatever arrangement is made that the incidence of the rate will be a bit worse under one system than under another. The right hon. Gentleman was very indignant at the idea of the management of the police being handed over to the County Councils. I do not think that the Chief Secretary for Ireland is a good authority on the question of police; but whether or no, I should say that one of the first tests of a good system of Local Government is the putting of the management of the police into the hands of the people. Seeing that all the burghs of Scotland —that is to say, more than the half of the population of Scotland—already manage their police, why should not the County Councils be allowed to do so? The point was raised that it would be dangerous to put the management of the police in the hands of an elected body in the Crofter Districts. I quite agree, however, with the hon. Member for Caithness, that this is a bugbear which we need not be in the least afraid of. It would be easy to introduce checks to prevent danger arising under this head. Nothing would be easier than to authorize the Secretary for Scotland if any County Council was found to provide an insufficient police force to order that in that county a sufficient number should be maintained. And I believe that if such a provision as that were included in the Bill, it would never be found necessary to enforce it. With regard to another point, I hold that it is against the interests of education that the first three standards should be free and the other three standards not free. That will be offering a premium to a man whose child has passed the first three standards to take the child away. It is also unfair to the managers of the schools, because it will diminish the number of children in the upper standards at the very time when they are earning the largest amount of the grant. Again, I do not see why a man who does not happen to pay direct taxes should be denied the right of representation under the Bill. If

Parliament allows the service franchise in the election of Members of Parliament who have to decide questions of peace and war, why not allow it when men are to be chosen who will have to deal with questions of roads and bridges, Poor Law, contagious diseases, weights and measures, and such local matters. The arguments used against the service franchise in Scotland in this case are exactly the same as were used against extending the Parliamentary franchise to artizans in this country. There was the same cry then as now. It was always said, "These people whom it is proposed to admit to the franchise are going to be your masters." But those fears always turned out to be unwarranted, and it will be the same in regard to these County Councils. I represent a constituency which may be said to be wholly agricultural, which was trebled in number by the Act of 1885, the number of voters in 1884 being 1,829, and in 1886 nearly 6,000. Of the new voters, I daresay three-fourths belong to the service franchise, and though they are worthy to send me to Parliament, you say they are not worthy to send representatives of their particular parishes to Scotland. It is monstrous to say that these men do not contribute to the rates. They live in houses, the value of which is taken into consideration when they enter into engagements with the farmers for employment. But even supposing that you succeed in inducing most of the service franchise holders in the counties to consent to pay rates, how would you proceed to collect them. The amounts to be collected would be so infinitesimal that the cost of collection would probably exceed the amount paid into the County Exchequer. Now, to come to the constitution of the County Council itself. I must protest against the idea of my hon. Friend the Member for Orkney and Shetland that it would be better to alter the constituencies provided for by this Bill from single into double Member constituencies. I do not think that that would be an improvement in the Bill, and I believe such a suggestion has in the past only been heard from the lips of men who are generally considered as reactionary. Then I come to the point raised by my right hon. Friend the Member for Stirling Boroughs—namely, the election of Convener. The Chief Secretary seemed to think it was not an extraordinary thing to allow the Convener to be elected from outside the Council, or that it should be possible for the Convener to be a man who had never passed through the ordeal of election by a constituency. It seems to me that this is a most extraordinary theory, for this House of Commons, which governs the Empire, has not the power to elect its own Chairman, except from amongst the Members of its own body, and surely if such a restriction applies to the House of Commons, it ought equally to apply to the County Council. Well, then, there is another point, for I notice that a Convener of a County Council in Scotland is far below in dignity the Chairman of a County Council in England. For instance, under the English Act, he is made an *ex officio* magistrate of the county, but there is no such provision with regard to the Convener of the County Council in Scotland. Now I come to two other points which are of importance. The first is in regard to casual vacancies and double returns. It is proposed under the Scotch Bill that in case of casual vacancies occurring on the County Council, and in case of double returns, not that the constituency should fill the vacancy, but that the Council itself should have power to do so. I would urge that the precedent of the English Bill should be followed on this point. Then I object to the inclusion on the County Council of so large a number of *ex officio* members. I do not see why the Lord Lieutenant, who has no part or parcel in the operation of County Government and whose experience would be of no use whatever to the County Council, should be a member of the Council *ex officio*. I think it is a distinct hardship on these *ex officio* members of the first County Councils that they will, by not being subject to election, lose their claim to any particular constituency in their county. Now I come to the powers given under this Bill to the County Council. It seems to me it was hardly worth while to have gone to the trouble of creating the Councils at all, if you are only going to give them such powers as are proposed to be given to them under this Bill. You withhold all the most important subjects of local self-government—police, education, licensing, and the power of the purse. You propose to give them the whole powers and duties of the Commissioners of Supply, "Save as

in hereafter mentioned." Now this phrase "Save as in hereafter mentioned" contains the principal powers they now possess, viz: the control of the police and the power of the purse. To whom are these more important powers to be transferred? We know very well that in Scotland the real work of County Government is carried on by the Police Committee, and the right hon. Gentleman in framing this Bill remembered that, and thought that he would get round the difficulty by creating a Police Committee of his own, to whom these powers should be given, so he provided for the formation of a Police Committee, which is to have charge of the police, and to have the power of the purse. This Committee he proposes to constitute in the most extraordinary way, of a number not exceeding 14 Members, one half to be elected by the County Council and one half by the Commissioners of Supply, who are kept alive for this purpose alone. Granting that this Committee is passable and tolerable—and I maintain it is not—a much more extraordinary provision is made as to the appointment of the Chairman, and here, I think, I can feel the reek—the strong pungent reek of Parliament House in Edinburgh—for this Bill proposes that the Chairman of the Committee, with a double vote—both deliberative and casting—shall be the Sheriff of the County. Now the Sheriff of the County in Scotland is appointed by the Crown from the list of practising Advocates Sheriff and Substitutes of three years' standing, and except in the case of Lothian and Lanarkshire, these Sheriffs are under no obligation to reside in the county for which they are appointed. They will be as a rule neither ratepayers, nor capable of voting in their counties, and yet are to be made Chairmen of most important bodies under this Act. I think this is a monstrous proposal. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam;* the shoemaker should stick to his last, and my contention is that the Parliament House ought to be content with providing the Scottish counties with Judges and advocates, and ought not also to claim to provide them with the most important officer in their system of Local Government. Well, Sir, these are the criticisms I have to pass on this Bill. I myself feel that in assenting to the Second Reading of the Bill I assent to it simply because it is a framework which may be filled in. It is the somewhat barren stump on which we may engraft some new and more vigorous wood. We hope we may make it into something, but I should like to warn the right hon. Gentleman opposite that unless we get considerable concessions, more especially with regard to the franchise, with a view to making the County Council and the Parliamentary franchise co-extensive and co-equal, I shall feel that I am bound to do what I can to defeat the Bill.

*Sir C. DALRYMPLE (Ipswich): I should hardly have risen to take part in this debate had it not been for the observations which have fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite. I should like to point out, in the first instance, that we are somewhat accustomed to differences of opinion between hon. Gentlemen on the Front Bench opposite; but I do not think I have ever observed such wide differences of opinion as have been expressed by the speeches delivered by my right hon. Friend the Member for Stirling Burghs and the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken. My right hon. Friend the Member for Stirling Burghs delivered a fair and full criticism of the measure—a criticism of a generous and genial character, such as one might expect from him, and he gave the House fairly to understand that, on the whole, he looked with hope to the development of the measure before the House. But after hearing the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire, I am induced to ask whether he intends to move the rejection of the Bill, because I take it that no other course is compatible with the tone and language of his speech. The right hon. Gentleman quoted one or two old sayings at the expense of the measure. He said, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*, and then took the trouble to translate it for our benefit. He also mentioned that if you catch a Russian you may find a Tartar, and he translated that as meaning that if you scratch a sham Radical you find a Tory. I quite recognise in the tone of the right hon. Gentleman's speech the downright mortification which exists in some quarters in regard to this measure. For many a long day it has been supposed that this question of Local Government has belonged to one Party, but while Radical Gentlemen have talked about Local Government the present Ministry have proposed to

deal with the question. The right hon. Gentleman took exception to the intervention in the debate of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland, but I must say that I fail to recognize the description given by the right hon. Gentleman of the tone of the Chief Secretary's speech. I have heard nothing of the wrath and indignation to which he alluded, and I must say that I did hear him thank the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling Burghs for the tone of his speech and of his criticisms, and the friendly spirit in which he had couched his remarks. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the service franchise question. No doubt there is difficulty connected with that. I must say I should be heartily glad if we found it possible to include them in the electoral body, and certainly the trouble of collecting the rates might render it hardly worth while collecting them. But my point is that that is a question for discussion in Committee. The right hon. Gentleman complained that the licensing question had been left out of the measure. I think that is a somewhat captious objection on his part, seeing that he must remember the reception given last Session to the Licensing question, when it was proposed to include it in the Local Government Bill. It has been said that the machinery of this measure is large, while the duties proposed to be given to the County Councils are small. But should not the right hon. Gentleman take comfort from that very fact, because it is plain that the largeness of the machinery makes it possible in the future to give increased duties to the County Council as time goes on. Now the only thing in which I can join hands with the right hon. Gentleman is his reference to the Chairmanship of the Joint Committees, which it is proposed to vest in the Sheriff of the county. I know quite well that in some counties, such as the county of Mid Lothian, the arrangement would be a very acceptable one, because the Sheriff there is always a resident; but in other counties, it would not be equally acceptable, for I take it that the term Sheriff would include Sheriff Substitutes, and in many counties it would be felt that the Sheriff Substitute would not be an adequate or suitable Chairman for the Joint Committee. I hope the Government in this matter will consult the prevalent opinion of the Scotch Members. I will merely say before I sit down that many of these questions are questions strictly for discussion in Committee, and I hope that the debate on the Second Reading will not be unduly prolonged, because while it will really add nothing to the information of the House, it will only raise a number of points which can be better dealt with at a later stage of the Bill.

MR. W. A. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Debate adjourned till to-morrow at two of the clock.

COURT OF SESSION AND BILL CHAMBER (SCOTLAND) CLERKS BILL

(No. 214.)

Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, &c.

JUDICIAL FACTORS (SCOTLAND) BILL

(No. 166.)

Order for Committee read, and discharged; Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, &c.

OFFICIAL SECRETS BILL. (No. 97.)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [16th April], "That the Bill be now read the third time."

Question again proposed.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I think it is very strange that a Motion should be made to proceed with this Bill at this hour of the night, when the Minister in charge is not actually in his place, and I think that in the interests of the general business, and of this measure in particular, it would be wise for Ministers to withdraw it. This Bill raises many controversial points, and in regard to it we are anxious to challenge Her Majesty's Attorney General on the question of official secrets. I should like to point out that the Bill was carried through Committee with a rush at a time when a great many Members who intended to move amendments were absent, and I am sorry that the Government should now take advantage of a similar state of affairs in the House in order to try and get the final stage. Unless I get a sign from right hon. Gentlemen opposite that they will agree to defer the matter, I shall be prepared to move the adjournment of the debate. I am already quite prepared to express my opinion of the Attorney General in a

very few words. The Bill was introduced by the hon. and learned Gentleman without any observations, and I think we have very strong ground of complaint of the manner in which it has been pushed forward. I beg, therefore, to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER, I. W.): I was not here at the commencement of the debate on this matter, or I should have stated at once that I was prepared to consent to the Bill being re-committed in accordance with the pledge I had already given to that effect at the instance of some hon. Members. I think it is very desirable to re-commit the Bill in view of certain events which have recently been brought to my knowledge.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Then I presume that the Government agree to the adjournment of the debate.

*MR. RITCHIE (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): No; I think the suggestion of my hon. and learned Friend is that the Bill should be re-committed in order that certain Amendments may be considered. It would be better for the hon. and learned Member to withdraw his Motion for the adjournment of the Debate, then my hon. and learned Friend would move the re-committal of the Bill.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed, and Motion by leave withdrawn.

Bill re-committed for Monday next.

COMMISSIONERS FOR OATHS BILL. (No. 208.)

Order for Second Reading read.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time. It is simply a consolidation of the existing law, and I need hardly say that should, by any inadvertence, any statutes not be dealt with, I should be happy to consider the possibility of including them in the Bill. I hope the House will allow it to be read a second time.

Bill read a second time and re-committed for Monday next.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL. (No. 42.)

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: This Bill is one which raises the whole question as to the methods of the election of School Boards in Scotland, and it introduces changes on which there is certainly not very general agreement in Scotland. The hon. Gentleman naturally attaches considerable importance to the measure, but I am bound to point out that there is considerable difference of opinion, and I cannot possibly assent to a Second Reading of the Bill.

It being midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed on Thursday next.

ADVANCE NOTES TO SEAMEN BILL. (No. 222.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

*MR. RITCHIE: I am afraid that we cannot consent to make progress in Committee with this Bill, as my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade is not present.

Committee report progress; to sit again on Monday next.

BRIBERY (PUBLIC BODIES) PREVENTION BILL. (No. 158.)

As amended, considered.

Bill read a third time and passed.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT (1888) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 193.)

Amended in Committee; Bill read the third time and passed.

CHILDREN INSURANCE PREVENTION.

On Motion of Mr. Provand, Bill to make it illegal to insure the lives of children, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Provand, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Neville, Sir Tindal Robertson, Mr. Samuel Smith, Sir Guyer Hunter, and Sir Robert Fowler.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 245.]

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 9.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [JUNE 1.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 24th May, 1889.

BRIBERY (PUBLIC BODIES) PREVENTION BILL. (No. 90.)

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT (1888) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 91.)

Brought from the Commons, read 1ª, and to be printed.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

Report from, That the Committee have added the Lord Stanley of Alderley to the Standing Committee for General Bills for the consideration of the Hares Preservation Bill [H.L.]. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL. (No. 12.)

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; and to be read 3ª on Monday next.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL. (No. 78.)

NATIONAL DEBT BILL. (No. 79.)

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT (1855) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 50.)

Report from Standing Committee received (according to order): Moved that the Bill be not recommitted to a Committee of the whole House: On question, agreed to; Bill to be read 3ª on Tuesday next.

THE STANDING COMMITTEES.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

*THE EARL OF MINTO, in rising to ask the Chairman of Committees if he will state to the House on what principles the new Standing Committees on Public Bills are constituted, especially as regards the admission and exclusion of Peers who are not of judicial or official or ex-official standing; also, whether as regards Scottish legislation these Committees are to remain constituted as at present; also, whether, in his opinion, the words of the Standing Order No. LIV. (to the effect that "at any Committee of our own" any Lord, though not of the Committee, is entitled to come in and to speak but not to vote) are applicable to the case of the new Standing Committees, said: I had some hesitation in putting on the Notice Paper the questions I am about to ask—as they may appear to be of a somewhat invidious character. But in what I propose to say, no susceptibilities shall be wounded. In fact, I take no exception to any of the names that appear on the list of Members either of the Committee of Selection or the Panel of Chairmen, or of the Standing Committees. On the contrary, the House has chosen a Committee of Selection, and has chosen well. The Committee of Selection in its turn has chosen a Panel of eight Chairmen, and has chosen well; no men of greater ability and better business habits could have been found. Again, the Committee of Selection have chosen 98 Peers to serve on the two Standing Committees, and on the whole has chosen well. I find no fault with the materials of the new organization. If it is, in some respects, defective, the faults are those not of commission but omission. Again, as regards the new system. I think it

probable that a well-chosen Committee, presided over by a good Chairman, may transact the business committed to them with great efficiency. But it must be remembered that the greater the efficiency, the greater the confidence felt in the proceedings of these Committees, the less will be the disposition to scrutinize Bills in Committee of the whole House, so that virtually the Committee of this whole House stage in the passage of Bills through Parliament will be largely superseded. Moreover, to consign Bills to a limited number of Peers is to derogate from the theoretical equality of the rights of all Peers in matters of legislation. The change in the House of Lords by the adoption of this new system is much more sweeping than what has been done in the Commons. In the Commons the only Bills that are referred to the Standing Committees are those connected with law and trade. In the Lords all public Bills are to be referred, or are capable of being referred, to the new Standing Committees. I have made an analysis of the composition of the Standing Committees as at present constituted, dividing them into three categories. The first category consists of all the Law Lords; the second, of all Peers who are now holding office or who have formerly held office. The list includes not only those who hold or have held high office, but those also who have held subordinate posts in the Administration. The nomination of Peers in these two classes is virtually of an *ex officio* character. The third class consists of the residue of the Peerage—men who have never been connected with office. There are now two Standing Committees—one for legal Bills, the Members being 40 in number; the other for General Bills, numbering 60—but as two Peers belong to both Committees, the actual number of Peers appointed to serve on them is 98, not 100. Here is the analysis—

	For Legal Bills.		General Bills.		Totals.
1st. Law Lords ..	10	..	2	..	12
2nd. Official and Ex-official..	20	..	38	..	58
	30	..	40	..	70
3rd. Unofficial....	10	..	20	..	30
	40	..	60	..	100

(2 being counted twice.)

Thus, while the legal and official and ex-official elements (58 Peers in all) are a large majority of the whole, and are in fact of an *ex officio* character, only 30 Peers out of the whole body have been chosen who have been unconnected with office. Some of the omissions are particularly noteworthy. 1st. The whole Bench of Bishops; 2nd, the whole of the Representative Peers of Scotland, 16 in number, with the exception of one of the number who now holds office. Some 44 in all are omitted from the Committees. As regards Scottish legislation it is proposed in the House of Commons that there shall be a Grand Committee for Scottish legislation, consisting exclusively of Scottish Members. This I think objectionable. But in the case of these new Standing Orders in the Lords, the composition of the Committees is not what it ought to be. The Peers connected with Scotland on these Committees are as follows:—

	Legal Bills.		General Bills.
1st. One Law Lord.....	1	..	1
2nd. Two Official and Ex-official	2	..	8
One Unofficial	1	..	1
	4		10

Total 14; but one has been counted twice. Therefore, the actual number is 13.

*The Earl of MORLEY: My Lords, I scarcely understand why this question is addressed to me, because I am not ordinarily responsible for the composition of these Committees, except so far as I am *ex officio* Chairman of the Committee for selecting Peers to serve on the Standing Committees; but as the noble Lord has referred to me, I will do my best to answer. It is difficult to lay down any distinct principle on which noble Lords are chosen for the Standing Committees. As your Lordships are aware, the new Standing Order provided that there might be four Committees, and that the aggregate number of Peers that might be appointed upon them was to be 150. Having that number in view, with only two Committees to be appointed, it seemed to the Committee of Selection that if they appointed 100 Peers and distributed them between the two Committees that would in spirit be consistent with the Standing Order, and would perhaps be a little more liberal than the House intended to be. I need

not say that by limiting the number of Peers on the Committees it is impossible to avoid the omissions to which the noble Earl referred. It is of the essence of a Standing Committee that it should not be a Committee of the whole House. As to the omission of right rev. Prelates, no doubt in certain classes of Bills their presence would be not only useful, but I may say almost indispensable. With the view of meeting a case of that kind, it was laid down by the Standing Orders that the Committee of Selection should have the power to add to a Standing Committee a certain number of Peers not exceeding ten for the consideration of certain Bills. This power has been exercised to a large extent with reference to the Bills already referred to the Standing Committees, and I am quite sure the Committee of Selection will only be too glad to excercise it to the fullest by adding to the Committees noble lords who are specially interested in any Bills. It appears to me that this is one way of meeting the question of omission raised by the noble Earl. It is hardly to be expected that the Members of the Episcopal Bench would have time or inclination to devote themselves to the details of many of the Bills sent to the Standing Committees. As to the omission of Scotch Representative Peers, I never myself, and I doubt very much whether any of my colleagues on the Committee of Selection had any particular regard to the fact whether the Peers selected were or were not Scotch Representative Peers. The principle, if I may call it a principle, which guided us was this. We went through, with the help of noble Lords of experience on both sides of the House, the list of Peers, and as far as we could, we appointed those Peers who generally attend to the business of the House, and who would, in our belief, desire to serve on the Committees. In doing so, I have not the slightest doubt that we have omitted some noble Lords who would be very useful, and I am sure that the Committee will only be too glad hereafter to remedy any mistakes they had been guilty of, and to add as far as they can to the appointments already made. What I said with regard in the omission of right reverend Prelates also seems to me to apply to Scotch Members. I understand the noble Lord to state that there are 13 Scotch Peers on those Committees; and the addition of ten Scotch Peers, which would be made in the case of important Scotch Bills, would appear to give a fair and adequate representation of Scotland. This elasticity is specially provided in the Standing Orders, and with all submission it appears to me that that elasticity obviates the necessity for any special constitution of the Committees, for the discussion of Scotch or ecclesiastical or any other Bills. As regards the last point of the question of the noble Lord, I have no hesitation in saying that the Standing Order No. 54, under which any Lord, though not of a Committee, is entitled to attend and speak, but not to vote, does apply to Standing Committees. as it does to every other Committee; but I should doubt whether such a noble Lord, not of the Committee, would be entitled to move an Amendment, although he would have power to speak on any subject before the Committee, or on any Amendment moved by a Member of it. I think that as far as I can I have answered the question put to me by the noble Lord. I am sure that if there is any Bill in which he is especially interested which is referred to one of these Committees, the Members of that Committee would be glad to add his name to their list.

*THE EARL OF BELMORE: I wish to put another question to the noble Lord opposite (the Earl of Morley) upon this subject of Standing Committees, and I may mention the reason that I address the question to him is because I have been informed by a Member of Her Majesty's Government that he is the proper person to answer the question. I wish to know whether arrangements cannot be made to enter upon the Journals of the House the proceedings of the Standing Committees, and also the attendance of noble Lords on those Committees. When a Bill goes into Committee of the whole House, if anything of importance is done in Committee it is recorded in the journals, with of course, as the Committee sits in the same appartment as the House, the attendance of noble Lords. Now, we send many of our most important Bills to another room. It is arranged that both the Standing Committees shall sit concurrently with the House, and almost all noble Lords who pay constant attention to our business

are engaged on either one or other of the Committees. Last Tuesday one Committee sat a little earlier than the House, and the other at, I believe, the same time, and on inquiry from a noble Lord, whose duties required him to be here, as to how many Members there were in the House, I was told that there were only about seven. As we cannot be in two places at once, and as it is obvious that the work of the Standing Committees is more important than the business which is put down in the House on the days when they are meeting, I think it is only reasonable that the names of those noble Lords who attend should be recorded. With regard to the recording of the proceedings of the Committee what I am suggesting would be no innovation at all, because as I have pointed out, proceedings in Committee of the whole House are already recorded, and I think is if of historical importance that what takes place in the Standing Committees should equally be recorded in a permanent form.

*THE EARL OF MORLEY: I think the noble Lord has brought forward a subject which may be usefully discussed by your Lordships. I quite agree that there ought to be a record of the proceedings of the Standing Committees. The only doubt I have, after making inquiries, is exactly the form in which they should appear. The Journals only record proceedings of the whole House, and the Reports which are submitted to the House by the various Committees. If you introduce into the Journals the proceedings of the Standing Committees they can only form part of the Report of those Committees to the House. Now, it would obviously be inconvenient, and would make the Journals bulky and difficult to refer to, if they were burdened with matter foreign from the work of the House itself. What I venture to suggest is that the proceedings of the Committees should be reported and placed in an appendix at the end of the Journal.

*THE EARL OF BELMORE: But in the book itself.

*THE EARL OF MORLEY: Yes, in an appendix to the journals, so that that portion may be bound separately if desired. There is good precedent for appendices. Up to the year 1850 the appendices to the journal formed a considerable part of the whole volume, which was very much thicker then than it is now. If the House will agree to that, I would suggest that the proceedings of the Committee and the attendance of the Peers should be printed in an appendix at the end of the volume, including of course, any Amendments that are proposed to the various Bills.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I venture to hope that the House will not make any change until it has had full experience of the working of these Committees. For the present, I think the more simple the record of the proceedings the better. As time goes on we shall find out whether it is desirable to have fuller records in the Journal, but let us be guided by experience, and not by mere theory, and let the arrangement go on to the end of the Session before making any further change.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: I do not know whether my noble Friend who has just spoken is aware that the House came to a Resolution on this subject some few days ago, and that, in fact, the proceedings of the Standing Committees are recorded and circulated with the daily Minutes of proceedings. That certainly applies to the Standing Committee over which I have the honour to preside to which are referred all general Bills. The question was raised in that Committee at one of our meetings whether it was not desirable, as the Committee was in effect substituted for Committee of the whole House, that some record of the proceedings should be taken, and in consequence a Resolution was moved in this House and was agreed to, that the proceedings of the Standing Committee should be printed and circulated with the Minutes. I wish further to point out that in doing this the House has followed the practice which has been adopted by the House of Commons. I doubt very much whether the attendance of Peers ought to be printed under any circumstances with the Minutes. It would be an innovation on the constant practice of the House, and I for one should be sorry to see it. At the same time your Lordships will remember that inasmuch as these Committees have taken the place practically and almost nominally of the Committee of the whole House, it does seem that it would be a misfortune not to have a record of

the attendance of Peers. I believe we are the only Assembly in the world of which it can be said that for centuries the attendance of each individual Peer has been almost without break or variation recorded in the Journals; and, as a matter of antiquarian and even historical interest it would be a great misfortune if there were now to be any break.

*EARL STANHOPE: My Lords, there is one very small point to which I would like to draw attention, and that is the very inadequate accommodation that there is provided for the meetings of these Committees. Some amount of inconvenience has already been felt, although all the noble Lords appointed on the Committees have not been in attendance. We shall presently have important measures sent to us from the House of Commons which will no doubt excite great interest, and the attendance at the Committees will be much larger. Therefore it is absolutely necessary that this question of accommodation should be dealt with. I am not certain that it would be altogether practicable, but it has occurred to me that provision might be made for these Committees in the new rooms at the side of the Central Hall.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I quite agree with what has fallen from noble Lords as to the importance of some record being preserved of the proceedings of the House of Commons, but I also agree with the noble Marquess that it is equally important that the proceedings should not be too formal. I think the short Minutes to which the noble Earl (the Earl of Carnarvon) has referred are quite sufficient. I cannot conceive it possible that the House, which has, be it remembered, to deal with Bills after they have left the Commons, should be left in ignorance of what has taken place, and the Divisions that have been had, and the Amendments that have been unsuccessfully proposed.

VISCOUNT HARDINGE: I wish to draw the attention of the House to another point in connection with these Standing Committees. It appears that the average attendance at the meetings is very small indeed. Without making any invidious criticism upon the constitution of the Committees, I must say that there are some Members who are by no means regular in their attendance. Why they should have been put on I do not know; but, as some noble Lords feel agrieved at their not having been appointed to serve on these Standing Committees, I think greater caution might be exercised in selecting those Peers who are fit and proper and willing to serve.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: It is quite true that the proceedings of the Standing Committee for General Bills do appear on the Minutes, but those of the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., do not, and I think it is extremely unfortunate that they do not. My noble Friend (Lord Herschell) is to-night going to move the rejection of a Bill which has been before that Committee; many important divisions were taken, and it would be of the greatest advantage for your Lordships to see how those divisions went; but, unfortunately, there is no record of them whatever.

*LORD BRABOURNE: I sincerely hope that the noble Lord at the head of the Government will reconsider his decision with regard to records of the proceedings of these Standing Committees. The present system is all very well for those Peers who serve on the Committee, but it is exceedingly hard that those who are not Members should have no opportunity of ascertaining what has been going on, especially having regard to the fact that the Bills when they leave the Committees, come up to the House for final adoption or rejection. With regard to what has occurred to-day, I cannot sit down without making one respectful remark to my noble Friend at the head of the Government. I think the objection I ventured to take to the appointment of these Standing Committees in the first instance is now becoming better understood by noble Lords who have reconsidered the subject. A great many Peers have begun to find that they are practically disfranchised, and have not the opportunities of discussing various measures that they had before the Committees were appointed. It is a very singular thing that we should have tried to find a remedy for our having nothing to do in following precisely that course which was adopted by the House of Commons for precisely the reverse complaint. We have surely

plenty of time to discuss all the measures that are brought before us. Indeed, about the only thing which can be said in favour of these Standing Committees is that they lead to a greater occupation of your Lordships' time, because there is no doubt that in the case of all important Bills we shall in the House itself have to go all over the work that has been dealt with by the Committees. Meanwhile, the work is not always better done than would have been the case if it had been performed in the House itself. I may instance the proceedings in the General Committee upon the Smoke Bill (Metropolis) wherein, doubtless from the absence of special information upon the subject, I understand that a decision has been arrived at which will prevent any railway engine from approaching within several miles of the Metropolis. This work will have to be undone by the House if we are to preserve the inhabitants of the Metropolis from an inconvenience which would amount to a calamity. Of course, the House has decided to try the experiment of Standing Committees, and it should have a fair trial; but I do hope that the noble Marquess will give the matter his careful reconsideration, and that if he finds that we are practically re-discussing in the body of the House that which has previously occupied the attention of the Standing Committees, and if he finds, moreover, that there is, as I think there is, just cause of complaint by Peers who are deprived of opportunities of discussing Bills in which they are interested, he will not scruple to abolish this new reform, which, although no doubt a measure of progress, does not appear to be one of progressive improvement.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I have no doubt that if the predictions of the noble Lord are fulfilled, the House will not hesitate to alter the Standing Orders and abolish these Standing Committees. I rose, my Lords, simply to say that I have not objected to the circulation of Minutes such as those to which the noble Earl (the Earl of Carnarvon) alluded. What I referred to was the suggestion that the proceedings of the Committees should be entered in the Journal, which means a very large amount of formality and detail, the introduction of which I strongly deprecate.

Lord Brabourne

LARCENY ACT, 1861, AMENDMENT (USE OF FIREARMS) BILL. (No. 82.)

THIRD READING.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: In asking your Lordships to give a Third Reading to this Bill, I shall not trouble your Lordships with any further observations upon its principle. We have already had two Second Reading debates on the measure. During both debates, almost everything that could be said for or against the Bill was put forward, and your Lordships, by overwhelming majorities, approved of the principle of the Bill. Under these circumstances I confess that the course which my noble and learned Friend opposite (Lord Herschell) proposes to take in moving the rejection of the Bill on the last stage, appears to me to be somewhat unusual. I desire to call attention to a Report on this subject which was issued in 1875. Lord Cross, when Home Secretary in that year, issued a circular to Her Majesty's Judges, to Chairmen of Quarter Sessions, Recorders of Boroughs having Quarter Sessions, Stipendiary Magistrates, the Magistrates of the Metropolitan Police Courts, and to Sheriffs and Sheriff Substitutes in Scotland, asking five questions with regard to the use of firearms. The fourth and fifth questions referred to the subject which was dealt with by the Bill now before their Lordships. The questions were: (4) Should flogging be authorized for other kinds of violence than those which came within the provisions of 26 and 27 Vict., c. 44, especially for assaults on women and children; and (5) has flogging been efficacious for putting down offences for which it was applied by 26 and 27 Vict., c. 44. Answers were obtained from all the Judges, and those who gave evidence that flogging was a sufficient deterrent were, the late Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, Mr. Justice Blackburn, Mr. Justice Mellor, Mr. Justice Lush, Mr. Justice Quain (who said that flogging was the only punishment except death that was really deterrent), Mr. Justice Archibald, Mr. Justice Coleridge, and Mr. Justice Brett. Now, as my noble Friend the Master of the Rolls, has not proved himself to be an enthusiastic admirer of this Bill, I wish not in the least to overstate what he said in reply to these questions. I do not say that he advo-

cated flogging, but he did say that it had proved an efficient deterrent. I will read his Lordship's own words. In reply to the fifth question, he said:—

"According to my experience it has, as applied in these cases, certainly had a material deterrent influence."

So that the noble and learned Lord was then, as I have no doubt he is now, of opinion that flogging had proved an efficacious deterrent, and that is all I claim for this Bill. Mr. Justice Grove was of the same opinion. I would like to quote the remarks of Mr. Justice Lush, who, as everybody knows, was a kindhearted and gentle-minded man. In reply to the fifth question he said—

"I believe it has. When I first went to Manchester in the spring of 1866 there was a general feeling of alarm at the prevalence of what was called garrotting. It had increased notwithstanding that heavy sentences of penal servitude had been awarded in the previous Session. I had as many, I think, as 20 or 21 flogged. I went again in the summer of the same year and had to administer the same punishment to about half that number. I have been there five times since and have only had one such case, and that was three or four years ago. The same result has followed at Leeds and Chester, and the crime has all but disappeared. From what I have seen and heard from prisoners, some of whom have implored me to give them any term of penal servitude rather than the cat, and from what I have been told by governors of gaols, I have no doubt that flogging is more dreaded than any amount of imprisonment or penal servitude; and that the suppression of garrotting is attributable solely to the infliction of this kind of punishment."

After this expression of opinion, what weight can we attach to the exception which was taken to the noble Marquess's assertion that the punishment of flogging had "acted like a charm" in suppressing garrotting? So much for the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas and the Court of Queen's Bench which existed in those days. Then came the Barons of the Exchequer. They were unanimous. Chief Baron Kelly said that flogging had "utterly put an end to garotting." Mr. Baron Bramwell was of opinion also that it was "a thoroughly efficacious deterrent." Mr. Baron Piggott agreed. Mr. Baron Pollock made a remarkable statement, which I would like to read to your Lordships. He said:—

"I think flogging should be authorized in all cases of assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm. . . . I do not think it would be desirable to authorize flogging for indecent assaults."

Then comes a remark which is more to the purpose. In reply to Question 5 he says:—

"Flogging has, in my judgment, been efficacious in putting down these offences. Before I had experience as a Judge I was not in favour of flogging, nor did I believe in its efficacy. I have now been five Circuits in the Northern and Midland counties, and from what I have seen and heard in court, from what I have gathered from conversations with Magistrates, governors of prisons, and others, I am thoroughly satisfied that the practice of flogging has worked well, and gone far to put an end to systematic robberies with violence."

I think, my Lords, that that is extremely important testimony, coming as it does from a learned Judge of vast experience, who was at first predisposed against this form of punishment. Then Baron Cleasby was also in favour of it, and so was Mr. Baron Amphlett. Of all the Judges whose opinions were asked upon this question, two only expressed an opinion adverse to flogging as a deterrent punishment. Those were the late Mr. Justice Keating and Mr. Justice Denman. Then, going on with this Report, the Chairmen of Quarter Sessions were unanimous in favour of flogging; so were all the Recorders of Boroughs having Quarter Sessions, all the Stipendiary Magistrates, and the Magistrates of the Metropolitan Police Courts—in fact, all persons who had had the best of opportunities for forming an accurate opinion, and who had had most experience in the administration of the law, bore testimony to the efficacy of this punishment, and the wonderful effect it produced on criminals insensible to other kinds of punishment. I think that that testimony is of far more value than the theories of noble Lords opposite who, however trustworthy may be their opinions on other matters, have not had anything like the means of forming a correct judgment on this question that were possessed by these witnesses I have called in support of the Bill. My Lords, it is said that the policy of this Bill is one of *lex talionis*. It is nothing of the kind. That is not my object in bringing forward the measure. I want to put a stop to this new practice of the criminal classes of going about armed, prepared to carry out their criminal intentions *per fas aut nefas*, heedless whether they murder or maim those who oppose them. I believe that the result of the passing of this Bill will be that that practice will be dis-

continued. These individuals will not face the possibility and probability and peril of a punishment such as flogging. Utterly callous in regard to the pain they inflict upon others, they are altogether sensitive about the penalties that may be inflicted upon their own persons. I am bound to admit—and I will make the noble Lord opposite a present of the admission—that if in the repression of this crime by this means, some of these miscreants should suffer in their own persons, I should read the record of that suffering with a considerable amount of equanimity. That is not the object of the Bill, but I should think that if, after this Bill has become law, a man goes about armed to commit his depredations, he will have himself to blame if in consequence of doing so he receives a sound flogging.

Moved "That the Bill be now read."—(*Earl of Milltown.*)

LORD HERSCHELL: I regret that my noble Friend opposite should have thought it right to express disapproval of my objecting to this Bill upon the Third Reading. My noble Friend may be consoled, I think, by the fact that he knows beforehand that he will defeat me by an overwhelming majority, and that all I shall have will be the satisfaction of my protest. Therefore, I do not think he need feel aggrieved by the course which I feel it my duty to take. My Lords, I am quite prepared for being set down as a sentimentalist, and a humanitarian, because I object to the measure which is now before your Lordships. I do not myself believe that I can lay any special claim to being a humanitarian. I am disposed generally to look at matters from a practical point of view, and my objections —be they right or wrong—to this measure are practical. Ido not think anybody can dispute that there are practical objections to a measure which inflicts the punishment imposed in certain cases by this Bill. Some of them have been quite frankly admitted by those who are in favour of the Bill passing into law. My noble and learned Friend Lord Bramwell admitted that one evil connected with the infliction of punishment of this description was that it was apt to have a brutalizing and injurious effect on those who had to be the instruments of inflicting that punishment. I do not suppose that anybody will dispute that that is a real and substantial objection to it. And, my Lords, though I do not propose to dwell upon the effect that it may have upon those who suffer under it for the offences that they have committed—because I am quite aware that the argument is that it is intended only to be inflicted upon those who are already such brutes that they cannot be further brutalized—yet I would remind the House that human tribunals are not infallible, and that men are convicted of the offences to which this Bill has reference who are innocent of the crimes with which they are charged. ("Oh!") I have in my mind at this moment cases within my own experience where men have been so convicted, and who would in all human probability have received a severe flogging if this Bill had been law when they were so convicted. Now, I quite admit that you cannot undo any punishment that you inflict; at any rate, I agree with that to some extent, although it is not a very conclusive argument. It is perfectly true that you cannot undo the imprisonment which you have inflicted on a man who turns out to have been innocent of the offence of which he has been wrongfully convicted; but your reason for inflicting this punishment is that you intend it to be inflicted on brutes, and that it is a punishment of a specially degrading character. ["No, no."] I certainly have heard that argument used by some who have advocated this punishment. If it is not to be regarded as of a degrading character, certainly we differ very much in our estimate of what its real character is. It may be quite proper to inflict it, that is another question; but I say that for a man to be stripped bare before his fellow men, and flogged with a cat-o'-nine tails by a prison warder, is a punishment which an innocent man would feel beyond almost any other punishment.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I think the noble and learned Lord has misunderstood what has been advanced in support of the Bill. I am not aware that any of its advocates have said that this punishment is intended to be brutalizing.

LORD HERSCHELL: I certainly understood that it had been advanced as a special merit of this punishment,

when applied to those for whom it was intended, that it was of a degrading character. But I put that aside. If it be true that this is a punishment which above all other things a man would dread to have inflicted, then obviously you are going to add to the risks which any innocent man wrongfully convicted will suffer the infliction of a punishment which on your hypothesis, is one which any man would care for more than penal servitude. I cannot conceive anything which would be more likely to be a sting in a man's mind for the rest of his life than that he should have been convicted of an offence of this description when innocent, and flogged with the cat-o'-nine-tails in the prison yard. I will venture to say that an innocent man suffering in this manner would be likely to feel that more, and think of it more, than the mere imprisonment, the mere deprivation of his liberty. That is one of the objections that I feel to this measure. And, my Lords, it is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that if this principle be a right one, there are many who desire its application (and, in my opinion, it ought to be applied) to many cases that are outside this Bill. We cannot forget what has passed in another place. I observe that one Member of the other House voted for a measure similar to this on the ground that he hoped to have the punishment applied to persons convicted of indecent assaults; and, although there is no class of crime which excites greater abhorrence, it is impossible to doubt that there are few offences of which an innocent man is more likely to be found guilty. I think it is a perilous course to adopt a principle of punishment the essence of which is the mere infliction of pain. No one has less sympathy with or is less likely to stand friend to Bill Sykes than I, but when we adopt a principle of this sort I think we run considerable danger. If, in spite of the passing of this Bill, burglars still carry firearms, it will then be said that we must carry the principle further and inflict some punishment of a still more severe character. I altogether doubt the wisdom in the present day of resorting to or increasing the infliction of punishments the mere principle of which is to give physical pain. These, my Lords, are objections to the general character of the measure. I now come to deal with the Bill itself. If it had dealt with the use of firearms or murderous weapons in connection with burglary, I could have understood that it was founded on some principle; but the Bill applies to the case of a man with an unloaded pistol, and that whether he has or has not the means of loading it in his possession. I confess that is an anomaly which I do not like, and I endeavoured in Committee to instil some principle into the Bill, but without success. I sought to limit it to cases of loaded firearms, or cases where the man had ammunition and also an unloaded firearm in his possession, or cases in which the unloaded firearm had been used for purposes of intimidation. I also endeavoured to apply the Bill to the possession of deadly weapons other than firearms, but the Committee rejected those proposals. A man, therefore, who has an unloaded pistol in his possession may be flogged, while one who has a dagger and actually uses it will be considered less criminal and incapable of being flogged under the Bill. But, more than that. One knows that burglars use other implements besides guns and pistols. I dare say some of your Lordships have seen—I have more than once—what are called knuckledusters, which will destroy a man's appearance so that he may be disfigured for the rest of his life. A man may use weapons of that kind and yet not be punished under this Bill in the same way as a man who carries an unloaded pistol. For my part, I protest against legislation of that sort. I object to it altogether. If this is a right principle it seems to me that it ought to be applied in some cases in which it is not made applicable, and not applied in others in which it is. Besides, there are offences included in the Bill which are comparatively speaking trivial. For instance, a man breaking out of a church if in possession of an unloaded pistol might be flogged. If it could be conclusively proved that, in spite of those objections, more good would be done by the Bill than harm, one might accept it notwithstanding those objections; but I believe that the imagination of the noble Earl that when the Bill has passed burglars will cease to go about with firearms is not well

grounded. No doubt if the man committing the specified offence were certain that punishment would follow, that punishment would act as a deterrent whether it were flogging or mere penal servitude. But if a man is willing to risk the chances of penal servitude for life, the question is whether the mere addition of the chance of flogging will alter his view of the risks. And, my Lords, there is one danger (not, it seems to me, imaginary) which may result from this measure. Suppose you are right in saying that flogging is the punishment dreaded above all others by burglars, is there not a danger that the fear of it will induce burglars to use their firearms to effect escape, where, under other circumstances, they would not have used them? They will not receive any more severe punishment for using firearms than for merely carrying them. Now, with regard to the evidence of the effect of this punishment in the past, I should like to say a word or two. I know that many Judges think the punishment efficacious, and I know that some most eminent Judges have always been opposed to it, and some who I am quite sure could not be charged with sentimental reasoning. But the efficacy of punishments must be to a certain extent a matter of opinion. The noble Earl has quoted the opinion of a learned Judge who says that he went to Manchester, and that he inflicted flogging in a certain number of cases, and that the crimes ceased. [The Earl of MILLTOWN: Chester, and Liverpool, as well as Manchester.] Well, I have the records of the number of convictions and the number of sentences of flogging at Liverpool and Manchester. At Manchester (which was the town to which the noble Lord referred), I find that at the Summer Assizes of 1884, there were ten cases of garrotting, and two were flogged; at the Winter Assizes there were six cases, and none were flogged; at the Winter Assizes of 1885 there were 19 cases, and none were flogged; at the Spring Assizes of 1886, there were 13 cases, and 12 were flogged—the last is, I think, the occasion to which the noble Lord specially referred. At the Summer Assizes of the same year there were 13 cases, and six were flogged; at the Winter Assizes the same year, there were 15 cases. The truth is, it is a very difficult thing for any individual Judge to follow the results of the particular punishments which he inflicts, and determine what has caused a diminution of crime. I am satisfied that the infliction of long terms of penal servitude by my noble and learned Friend, Lord Bramwell, was that which really put a stop to garrotting. I do not deny that flogging may have terror for the criminal classes, but the real question is, will the addition of that punishment to penal servitude make the difference between committing the offence and not? My Lords, I have stated my objections to this Bill, and it seems to me that the problematical good to be obtained by passing it does not really outweigh the evils which everybody must admit, though opinions may differ as to their importance, to be real ones, which must result from this change in the law. I therefore beg to move that the Bill be read this day four months.

Amendment moved, to leave out "now" and add at the end of the Motion "this day four months."—(*The Lord Herschell.*)

*LORD NORTON: The noble Lord's argument, based on the possibility that a man might be wrongly convicted, would apply to all kinds of punishment, solely excepting fines, but especially to capital punishment. The test of proper efficacy of punishment lies in its preventing the repetition of a crime; and to prevent repetition the punishment must meet the motives of the offender. Therefore, refined punishments must always fail to affect the motives of men so brutal as to be capable of the most atrocious crimes. If mere physical pain is the only punishment which will effectually operate in certain cases, the fact that it is mere physical pain is not enough to justify its disuse. There are some loathsome diseases for which there are none but loathsome remedies; but no one on that account would suggest that the sufferer should neglect the only road to health. Corporal punishment as administered in the old days in the Army and Navy was undoubtedly brutalizing. Then as many as 300 or 400 lashes might be given; but under the present Bill 25 lashes is the maximum number that could be inflicted. Moreover, the infliction of the punishment would always be within

the discretion of the Judge, and no doubt a distinction would be made between burglars having loaded or unloaded pistols. Again, it is no argument against dealing with the use of firearms by burglars to urge that the use of several other kinds of destructive weapons is not dealt with in the Bill. As to certainty in the meaning of punishment flogging is superior to any other kind of punishment, and particularly to penal servitude, which is about the most uncertain of all punishments. A man who is sentenced to a term of penal servitude never really knows to what he is sentenced, the sentence never being fully carried out. It is said that the punishment of flogging is unequal because its severity depends on a man's constitution. But every kind of punishment is unequal in the sense that it must vary with the constitution or the circumstances of the man who bears it. I do not, however, know that there can be such an inequality in the infliction of 25 lashes that we should be so particular as to the exact amount of pain suitable for a man who has not hesitated to break into a house with the intention, if the householder resist the taking of his property, to blow his brains out. I ask the noble and learned Lord to consider whether he ought not to rest satisfied with what he has effected in the Standing Committee. He has so far emasculated the Bill as that if a burglar is not actually charged in the indictment with carrying firearms, although it may come out distinctly in evidence at the trial that firearms were in his possession at the time, he cannot be flogged. The Bill is thus altered so as to make it necessary that every burglar should be charged in the indictment with carrying firearms that, if it come out in evidence, he might be liable to flogging.

LORD HERSCHELL: I beg my noble Friend's pardon. That was not my Amendment. No doubt I approved of it, but I did not propose it.

*LORD NORTON: At any rate, the Amendment was very much supported by the noble and learned Lord. For myself I hope that your Lordships will regard this as the true test of punishment—namely, whether it meets the motives of the criminals who are to be prevented repeating their crimes; and applying that test in this case, I do not think the Bill is at all open to the objections taken to it by the noble and learned Lord.

*LORD ESHER: My Lords, I intend to vote with the noble and learned Lord opposite for the rejection of the Bill, and I do so on the ground that I think it is a cruelly unjust Bill, and that it contains within itself powers which are even contrary to natural justice. I also shall vote against the Bill because those who were in the majority in the Committee refused every Amendment which, in my opinion, would have made the Bill decent and just. It is said that flogging would be more efficacious than a sentence of penal servitude without it. That may be so; but, as to that argument, if, besides giving the Judge power to flog the prisoner, power were also given to cut off one of his ears, no doubt that would be still more efficacious. How a burglar with an unloaded pistol and with no ammunition for loading it could blow out a man's brains, as the noble Lord who has just spoken has so often seemed to fear, I cannot understand. I shall adopt all the reasons of the noble and learned Lord opposite for voting against the Bill except one, and that is his argument as to the danger that innocent persons might be flogged. In all my experience at the Bar and as a Judge I have never known an innocent man to be convicted. I have known persons to be convicted and their sentences to be afterwards altered, not because it was proved that they were innocent, but because the matter was brought into sufficient doubt; and I have often advised that the punishment should be remitted on that ground, but I have never once been able to satisfy myself that a man who had been convicted was really innocent. However, all the other reasons advanced by the noble and learned Lord I adopt. I say it is unjust to subject a man to the same punishment whether he intended to use those weapons or whether he did not. But there is another matter in the Bill to which I would refer, and which as it stands proposes, I think, a monstrous injustice, and that is Clause 2. It relates to the case of two burglars going out together, only one of whom has a pistol in his possession. It may be proved to the satisfaction of the Judge and the jury that the other man did not know that his companion had a pistol, that he did not suppose that he had one, that he had even asked and made in-

quiries to ascertain whether he had one, and had been assured that he had not, and really believed that he had not. The man with the pistols escapes; the other is caught and convicted of the burglary. As the Bill stands that man, who had taken every means to convince himself, and who believed that his companion had not a pistol, can be flogged; the other escapes free. Now, I tried to get an Amendment to that clause, for the purpose of obviating that which I call a wicked injustice, and it was refused. I know it is said, "Oh, but the Judge would not flog a man under those circumstances; we give power to the Judge to flog him, but know he will never exercise it." Well, I have great admiration for Her Majesty's Judges, but I have not that absolute confidence in them, and I think, moreover, that it is wholly wrong to give power in an Act of Parliament which may produce a manifest injustice, and then to say, "Oh yes, but the Judges will not do that which the Act empowers them to do." I call that bad legislation. I have often had to construe the meaning of Acts of Parliament, and there is this very well settled rule which I have always acted upon. If an Act of Parliament uses general words, which are capable of two constructions, one of which would give a reasonable construction, the other of which would conduce to either uncertainty or wicked injustice, I have said that the proper construction of that Act of Parliament is to say that the former is the true construction. After this Act I can hardly say so. If it be really the intention that a man, under the circumstances I have referred to, shall not be flogged, plain and unmistakable words to that effect ought to be in the Act. I have asked the supporters of this measure to put the matter plainly in the Bill itself, and they have refused to do so. I say I will vote against any Bill which has such a monstrous clause in it.

*Viscount CRANBROOK: I venture to think that my noble and learned Friend (Lord Esher) is entirely mistaken in the argument he has used. Where two prisoners are tried together it happens over and over again that though they are both liable to the same punishment the Judge differentiates the punishment according to the evidence given against each of them. Two men might be charged with manslaughter and one escape with a week's imprisonment, while the other was sentenced to ten years' penal servitude. It is a necessity that Judges should be invested with such discrimination. The 2nd Clause of the Bill merely provides against an invasion of this principle. It is idle to talk of the situation created by one burglar saying to another, "I hope you have no firearms nor anything that will get us into a scrape." We have to deal with the common practices of criminals, and it would be impossible to deal with culprits of the worst kind if the accomplice of a man who used a weapon was not liable to the same punishment as his comrade with whom he would have shared the plunder had their venture been successful. It must be left to the discretion of the Judge to say whether there was any difference between the two. I have never been a great advocate for flogging, and I know it is a question which raises considerable doubts in men's minds; but it is absurd to compare flogging with mutilation. It was enacted that flogging might be resorted to in certain cases of robbery. A friend of mine was garrotted, and in less than a minute was so injured by the pressure upon the throat that he had to keep his bed for three months. You must use strong measures to deter men from committing such crimes; and it is believed that flogging will operate as a corrective and preventive. If you cannot change a man's heart you may change his mind and show him the folly and wickedness of such crimes. The use of firearms has come to the front lately; and it is hoped to put down that practice not by cruelty, but by well-deserved punishment.

*Lord BRAMWELL: I trust your Lordships will read this Bill a third time. I very much agree with my noble and learned Friend opposite that it would be better if this 2nd Clause had been left out. Everyone knows that there does exist a great objection to corporal punishment, and it would have been safer to have left out that clause. But my noble and learned Friend did not quite do justice to those who persisted in retaining it. The argument used for it was this—It is true that one of the party of burglars

may be possessed of a firearm or weapon, and it is true that his companions may not know of it; but what are probabilities? The immense probability is that each man knows what weapons of offence the others have. Then, it was said, let this clause remain in the Bill, and trust to the Judge not improperly to punish, unless there is satisfactory proof of knowledge on the part of the man who had not got the firearm that it was carried by one of the party. There is little doubt that there has been an increase in the number of burglaries committed with firearms—for one reason, because the miserable weapons which these people get are so cheap. That flogging is deterrent I have not the slightest doubt, though I have not had the opportunities of other Judges of knowing its effects. Some Judges in not ordering offenders to be flogged have neglected their duty, and I have told them so—in the most friendly way. The objection to flogging—that it is a punishment that cannot be effaced—applies to other punishments, too; and we must run some risk in inflicting all punishments, including capital punishment, which it is not proposed to abolish on that account. My noble and learned Friend said that he never knew of a case of a wrong conviction. Well, I congratulate him. Personally, I have certainly known of wrongful convictions, but the cases have been very few indeed—so few that I think we need scarcely have regard to the mere possibility of a man being improperly convicted and sentenced to be flogged. Punishment to be deterrent must be painful. I do not wish to refer to those who opposed this view of punishment as humanitarian, for that term was often applied offensively to very well-meaning people. But the Italian, Beccaria, who was a most humane man and who did so much for the regulation of the Criminal Law, and to make it reasonable and humane laid down these principles:

"Thefts which have not violence united with them should be punished with pecuniary penalities,"

in which he included loss of liberty as entailing loss of opportunity of earning money.

"In the case of thefts with violence the punishment should be corporal."

I do not say that your Lordships will be satisfied with the argument, but, at any rate, that is the opinion of a good and humane man in favour of the proposition which is now before your Lordships.

On question, "That 'now' stand part of the Motion," the House divided:—Contents 75; Not-Contents 19.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read 3ª accordingly.

Moved, "That the Bill be now passed."

On the Motion of LORD FITZ GERALD, the following Amendments were agreed to—

Clause 1, page 1, line 10, leave out first "and," and after "fifty-seven" insert "and sixty-one," Line 14, leave out from "felonies" to "all" in line 15. Page 3, lines 13 to 25, leave out Section 58, and insert the following Section:—

61. Whosoever shall steal any chattel, money or valuable security in any dwelling house, and shall by any menace or threat put any one being therein in bodily fear, shall be guilty of felony, and being convicted thereof, shall be liable, at the discretion of the Court, to be kept in penal servitude for any term not exceeding 14 years, and not less than three years, or to be imprisoned for any term not exceeding two years, with or without hard labour, and with or without solitary confinement.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

TOWN POLICE CLAUSES ACT (1847) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 83.)

Read 3a (according to order), with the Amendments, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 24th May, 1889.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

SHORTLANDS AND NUNHEAD RAILWAY BILL.

Order for consideration, read.

MR. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxto said there were some objections against the Bill which it would be necessary to state.

*Mr. SPEAKER: If the Bill is opposed it cannot be taken to-day.

Consideration of Bill deferred until Monday, May 27.

PETITION.

A POINT OF ORDER.

*Colonel SANDYS (Bootle Division of Lancashire) presented a petition, signed by 22,225 inhabitants of suburbs of London, calling attention to the growth of conventional and monastic institutions. The hon. Member was proceeding to read the petition at length, when

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) rose to order, and asked whether the hon. Member was regular in reading the petition?

*Mr. SPEAKER: What is unusual is that the hon. Member should read the terms instead of merely giving the substance of the petition.

*Colonel SANDYS: Then I will simply explain that the petition prays for a Commission to inquire into the condition of convents and monastic institutions, and for the passing of a law to secure the liberty of the subject.

Mr. S. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): May I ask the hon. Member——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

The petition was ordered to lie on the Table.

QUESTIONS.

BRITISH MEDICAL MEN PRACTISING IN SWITZERLAND.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Swiss Government have come to any decision with regard to British medical men practising in Switzerland — namely, whether they are obliged to possess a Swiss qualification?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. Fergusson, Manchester, N.E.): No decision has been come to in favour of British medical men practising generally in Switzerland, but we hope that permission will continue to be granted to individuals by the Cantonal Authorities.

METROPOLITAN POLICE CONTRACTS—MESSRS. ROSS & CO.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether masks, gloves, and singlesticks for the Metropolitan Police are being manufactured by the firm of Ross and Company; and whether Inspector Spice is still employed as a viewer?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. E. Stanhope, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Metropolitan Police make their own contracts for these articles without the intervention of the War Office. Mr. Spice is still an Inspector of accoutrements, and, as such, inspects on behalf of the Police Authorities the masks and gloves. The singlesticks come under another Inspector.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston): May I ask whether, when this firm was struck off the War Office list, the information was sent to the other Government Departments?

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: Yes, that was done, and information was given to the Home Office.

Mr. HANBURY: Then have any articles been received from them since?

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: I know nothing about the Government contracts.

INDIA—BENGAL BOARD OF REVENUE—APPOINTMENT OF MR. BEAMES.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether Mr. J. Beames, recently appointed a member of the Board of Revenue, Bengal, is the gentleman respecting whom the Government of India, in Letter No. 1,569, Simla, 14th July, 1887, requested the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal to—

"convey to Mr. Beames a formal expression of censure from the Government of India, for the breach of the Regulation which has been committed by him,"

that Regulation directing officers to disclose particulars respecting moneys borrowed by them from persons residing within their jurisdiction; whether Mr. Beames had failed to inform the Government of large loans contracted with Natives of India, in consequence of which the Governor General in Council directed—

"That the period of Mr. Beames' present officiating appointment in the Board of Revenue must be at once terminated, and that he should

be at once transferred to a suitable appointment within the jurisdiction of which no native creditor of his resides, or has an estate, or commercial establishment;"

whether, on the recent vacancy on the Board, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal sent the names of Mr. Smith, Sir H. Harrison, and Mr. Beames, in the order named, and the Lieutenant Governor expressed his opinion that Mr. Smith, a most deserving officer, of long experience, should be appointed, and strongly objected to Mr. Beames again becoming a member of the Board; whether the Secretary of State will state why, after the censure passed by Lord Dufferin on Mr. Beames, that gentleman was appointed to the Board of Revenue; and whether he will lay upon the Table of this House the correspondence between the Supreme and Bengal Governments concerning Mr. Beames in 1887, and any further correspondence concerning this appointment?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): Mr. Beames was reported to the Government of India in June, 1887, for having infringed a regulation of 1823, which imposes upon a member of the Civil Service the obligation of disclosing to the Governor General in Council the fact of his indebtedness to any person residing within a district to the charge of which, or to employment in which, he may be appointed subsequent to the contraction of the debt. The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal in making the Report, brought to notice the fact that Mr. Beames had always borne the highest character for zeal, straightforwardness, and efficiency, and added that the difficulties which led to his contracting these loans had not been the result of personal extravagance. He was, in consequence of this report, censured. The Secretary of State is aware that Mr. Beames has been since appointed to a seat on the Revenue Board. The circumstances under which the appointment, which was within the discretion of the Government of India, was made, have not been reported to the Secretary of State and would not in ordinary course be so reported; but an explanation will be asked for.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Do I understand that the hon. Gentleman is aware that the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, in sending in the names, strongly objected to Mr. Beames being again appointed, and is he aware that Mr. Beames was charged with the very same conduct as that for which Mr. Crawford was condemned?

*SIR J. GORST: If the hon. Gentleman will analyze my answer he will see that I have already dealt with those circumstances.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Will the hon. Gentleman say whether the Lieutenant Governor did strongly object to the appointment of Mr. Beames?

*SIR J. GORST: That, again, has already been answered in my reply.

THE METROPOLITAN MAGISTRATES.

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN (Battersea): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has yet arrived at any decision as to the re-arrangement of the duties of the Metropolitan Magistrates; and whether it is a fact that several of those gentlemen have reached an age which to a large extent incapacitates them from performing their duties; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take; I also wish to know whether one of the Police Courts in Central London cannot be closed with advantage to the public; whether, on the appointment of new Magistrates, their duties shall be limited to five days, instead of three days, as at present; and whether there is any truth in the rumour that at Wandsworth it is proposed to revert to the old and inconvenient system of half-day Magistrates?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): As to the first paragraph of the question, I am still in consultation with the Chief Magistrate and hope to arrive shortly at a satisfactory arrangement. I have no information before me showing that any of the Magistrates are incapacitated by age from performing their duties. The Senior Magistrates have held their Courts with due regularity and have cleared their lists. As to the supplementary questions, if the matter were *res nova* the Police Courts in Central London would not be arranged as they are now, but, considering that the people have grown accustomed to the Courts as they stand, I do not think any of them could be closed without causing inconvenience

and dissatisfaction. It is incorrect to say that the Magistrates' duties are limited to three days a week. There is no truth in the rumour that I propose to revert to the old system of half-day Courts at Hammersmith and Wandsworth.

MR. O. V. MORGAN: The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the dissatisfaction which exists to the closing of one of the Central Police Courts. Did not the opposition come from the public houses which in consequence would have lost their custom?

*MR. MATTHEWS: No; certainly not. There was great dissatisfaction among all classes who were accustomed to do business at the Court.

IRELAND—LAND SUB-COMMISSION FOR DUNGANNON.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland if he can say when the Land Sub-Commission will sit in Dungannon for the fixing of fair rents; and if 500 cases have been listed for a considerable time, and 350 prior to November, 1887, in the district of Dungannon?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Ireland): It appears from the Land Commission's Report that it is intended that a Sub-Commission shall commence its sitting for Dungannon Union next month. All applications to fix judicial rents received from that Union, up to and including October 26, 1887, have been disposed of. There are now 411 cases in all from the Union to be heard. Of these 287 were received after October 26, 1887, and prior to October 31, 1887.

PRIZE FIGHT NEAR BIRMINGHAM.

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is true, as stated in the *Morning Post* of the 20th instant, that on Saturday 19th May a prize fight took place at Moseley, near Birmingham; that both men were badly injured, but that the police did not interfere; and whether, if it is true that the police took no measures to stop this disgusting exhibition, he will undertake to cause the police or the police authorities, either or both, to be punished for such a dereliction of their duty?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I have not yet received a full Report on this matter, as the village in which the fight took place, though in Worcestershire, is attached to Warwickshire for police purposes; but I gather from a Report which I have received from the Chief Constable of Worcestershire that such a fight did take place, and was not interfered with by the police, as they had no information that it was likely to take place. I understand that the party proceeded to the scene of the fight in a large closed furniture van, and took a circuitous route, so that the suspicions of the police were not aroused. I am still in communication with the local police in the matter.

EXAMINATION OF RECRUITS.

SIR WALTER FOSTER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War on what grounds the primary medical examination of recruits by civil surgeons in different districts have been dispensed with; and whether the alternative of sending recruits to the nearest military centre at which an Army Medical Officer is stationed will entail considerable expense?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The primary medical examination of recruits by civil surgeons has been abolished, because it is estimated that there will be a considerable net saving in sending them to the nearest Army Medical Officer.

IRELAND—THE GOVERNOR OF DERRY PRISON.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland whether it is the fact that Captain Wilson, the Governor of the Derry Prison, told the Rev. John Doherty, Roman Catholic Administrator of Derry and chaplain of the gaol, on the occasion of his visit to the prison on the 20th instant, that he was instructed to "remonstrate with him" for calling to see "a certain class of prisoners, such as the Rev. Mr. Stephens, Mr. Kelly, and Mr. M'Hugh oftener than others confined in the prison;" whether he can tell the House who it was that instructed the Governor of the prison to make this remonstrance; whether the instructions of the Irish Executive impose upon the chaplain of a prison the duty of seeing on every occasion of a visit to the prison all the

prisoners of his denomination, or whether it is sufficient for him to visit those who, in his opinion, need a visit or desire one; and, whether it comes within the province of the Governor to exercise any authority over the chaplain in the discharge of the spiritual duties of his offices?

MR. MADDEN: I have communicated to the authorities and am awaiting a reply.

MR. MAC NEILL: Is the Captain Wilson referred to in the question the Captain Wilson whom the Chief Secretary, in reply to a question of mine on the 28th of March, stated had been guilty of an error of judgment in refusing, notwithstanding the remonstrance of the prison chaplain, to allow two poor women who were prisoners to wear warm clothing supplied by their friends, although a promise had been made by the Solicitor General that such clothing should be supplied. Did not the Governor refuse to carry out that promise?

*MR. MADDEN: The question which has been asked by the hon. Gentleman has only just been put into my hands. I can only say that the same Gentleman has been Governor of the prison during the period referred to, but I have no reason to believe that after an intimation was conveyed to him of the views of the Prisons Board on the subject referred that he refused to carry them into effect.

RATIONS FOR CAVALRY HORSES.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War at what stations the ration of oats for cavalry horses was last winter reduced from 10 lb. to 8 lb.; whether there exists, in accordance with Royal Warrant, an authorized normal scale for all stations, or whether officers are required to accept whatever forage allowance may be fixed at their particular station; why the allowance was reduced at particular stations only; whether the full ration was, after an experiment of about four months of reduced ration, restored, and why; and, at whose expense was the experiment made?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The Secretary of State is empowered by Royal Warrant to alter from time to time the forage ration; and this power was exercised last winter as an experiment, at about 30 small stations, where work was known to be much lighter in winter than in summer. The reduction consisted of giving the horse 8 lb. of oats and 13 lb. of hay, instead of 10 lb. of oats, and 12 lb. of hay. About a month before the drill season commenced the full previous ration was restored. The experiment was made with the approval of the principal veterinary surgeon, on the recommendation of experienced cavalry officers, and resulted in a reduced cost to the public of about £500.

TIMOTHY CONNIHAN.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the case of Timothy Connihan, aged 52 years, who, after 30 years' service, holding five good conduct badges, and his character and conduct while in the Militia being certified to have been "very good," was discharged as an invalid on 16th May, 1887, from the Cork Militia, owing to an accident sustained while on duty in June, 1883, a shell having fallen on his foot, the certificate stated that he had been discharged "as an invalid;" whether two military surgeons (Golding and Deane) certified to the injury, and that in consequence of it Connihan would be unable to follow his trade of slater; whether Connihan was refused any pension or compensation in consequence of an error (afterwards corrected) in the discharge, which had at first erroneously stated that Connihan had been discharged "on the termination of his engagement;" and whether, on the investigation of Connihan's case, the amended discharge and the medical certificates were examined, and the circumstances as to the error in the discharge investigated; and, if so, why Connihan was refused any pension or compensation?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: This man Connihan was discharged in 1887 as unfit for service, owing to heart disease. Inquiry has been made into the circumstances of the case, and the man's statement has been found to be altogether false.

THE FIELD CLUB.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether

the gambling prosecutions in connection with the Field Club were undertaken by the Government; whether Mr. Wontner represented the Government; and, if so, whether he was acting according to his instructions from the Government when he pressed the prosecution against the manager and servants of the club, but, upon their pleading "Guilty," declined to call evidence against the noblemen and gentlemen who had been apprehended, or to examine any of them, as the Law (17 and 18 Vict., c. 38) specially provides that they may be examined, saying that he would not

> "Pillory these gentlemen by calling them to give evidence, and so impose on them a penalty not contemplated by the Act;"

whether his attention has been called to the remark of the Magistrate—

> "That, if proof were given, he would inflict the penalty of 6s. 8d., but that would be ridiculous;"

and that the result of the course taken by the prosecution was that, the manager and servants having been fined on a plea of "Guilty," no evidence whatever regarding the occurences at the club was given; and that the other persons apprehended were released without any conviction recorded against them, the charge sheet being marked "Not proceeded with;" and if he can explain why the prosecution declined to put the provisions of the existing law in force, or to avail themselves of the stringent provisions of 17 and 18 Vict., c. 38, to discover what had been going on?

MR. MATTHEWS: The prosecution was undertaken by the Chief Commissioner of Police. The instructions given by him to Mr. Wontner, who represented him, were that he should call the players as witnesses. When, however, the manager and servants of the club pleaded guilty, Mr. Wontner said that, as the guilt of the persons summoned was admitted by their plea of guilty, there was no reason for putting the players in the witness box. I am informed by the Magistrate that there was quite enough evidence adduced on the first occasion to justify the conviction of all the players without calling any of them as witnesses, if the prosecution had thought it worth while to proceed for the trifling penalties under the Act of Henry VIII., which were the only penalties he had power to inflict. There was, therefore, no reason for calling the players as witnesses according to the provision of the Act quoted. The Magistrate said that he should be prepared to fine them 6s. 8d. on conviction, but that he agreed with the course taken by Mr. Wontner, considering that the imposition of such a penalty would be ridiculous, and more calculated to bring the law into contempt than to let them go free.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Has not the result of the decision been to hush up the whole affair. No evidence was given about the gambling, and, as far as the gamblers were concerned, were they not allowed to go free?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have so said, and have given the reasons why they were not convicted. If they had been convicted they could only have been fined 6s. 8d., as they could not be convicted under the Gaming Act, and that is the highest penalty the law imposes. The matter has in no way been hushed up, but the whole business carried on in this house was thoroughly exposed.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): May I ask whether, under the circumstances, the Government will consider the expediency of bringing in a Bill to strengthen the law against gambling?

MR. MATTHEWS: That is a grave matter, and will require consideration.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: It has been stated in the public prints that the proceedings in the first instance were postponed in order to allow the Treasury to prosecute. Was not the prosecution entirely conducted by the Chief Commissioner of Police, on his own authority, and without any communication with the Home Office or the Treasury?

MR. MATTHEWS: I can only repeat that the prosecution was conducted by the Chief Commissioner of Police.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Then I beg to give notice that on the Estimates I will take an opportunity to call attention to the way in which this matter has been hushed up.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): May I ask whether, before the Government instituted the prosecution and surrounded this club with hundreds of police and took these persons into custody, they knew that, as the final

result, a fine of only 6s. 8d. could be imposed?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Government had nothing to do with sending the police. It was the action of the police themselves.

TELEGRAPH APPOINTMENTS IN IRELAND.

MR. BLANE: I beg to ask the Postmaster General, with reference to the recent vacant provincial clerk in chargeship in the Northern district of Ireland, whether the person appointed to this vacancy recently held the position of "Inspecting Telegraphist" for that district; and, if so, for what period did he hold the appointment, and under what circumstances was he relieved of it; whether, as compensating him for any loss that he might possibly have sustained by being retired from that position, he was promoted to the first class of the telegraph staff of the Belfast Office; and, if so, upon what grounds has this additional appointment now been conferred upon him, and is he aware that it is generally regarded as a first class appointment; whether he is aware that there are many members of the staff of the second class in the Belfast Office, with service ranging from 12 to 20 years, who, although well qualified, are unable to obtain promotion owing to the dearth of vacancies in the superior class; whether until within three years ago appointments such as that of provincial clerks in charge were confined solely to members of the second class of long service; can he state at whose suggestion this rule was broken through in the Northern district; whether second class clerks are obliged to perform the duties of those first class clerks, who, as provincial clerks in charge, are absent from their head office in discharge of the duties incident to the latter position, and that without being accorded any of the privileges enjoyed by the first class; and, if so, irrespective of existing vacancies; and whether he will consider the advisability of creating as many additional first class clerkships as will accord with the number of members of this class who now hold the additional appointment of provincial clerks in charge?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): In reply to the hon. Member I have to state that the person recently appointed provincial clerk in charge in the Northern District of Ireland was, until about a year ago, an inspecting telegraphist, that this position he had held for about four years, and that he left it on promotion. His promotion from the second to the first class in the Belfast Office was in due course, and was in no sense given as compensation for the loss of his office as inspecting telegraphist. If at Belfast there are officers awaiting promotion from the lower to the higher class and if these officers have served from 12 to 20 years—respecting which time has not admitted of my obtaining information—Belfast is not in this particular different from almost every other office in the United Kingdom. The practice which obtained until recently of confining the appointment of provincial clerk in charge to members of the second class was altered by myself, as it appeared to me to rest on no solid ground. The second class officers who temporarily perform the duties of the first class when first class officers are detached to act as provincial clerks in charge, do not receive more than second class pay; and the number of such cases being extremely few, I do not think that in order to provide for them exceptional arrangements, such as the hon. Member suggests, would be justifiable.

NONCONFORMIST MARRIAGES BILL.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Camberwell (Mr. J. Kelly) if he can inform the House when the Nonconformist Marriages (Attendance of Registrars) Bill, introduced by him and ordered on the 22nd February to be printed, will be in the hands of Members; and whether he intends to move the Second Reading on the 31st inst.?

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I may inform the hon. Gentleman that I do not intend to move the Second Reading on the 31st inst., but that I propose to postpone the Bill until July. It is not yet printed.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): May I ask whether, when a Bill is brought in and ordered to be printed, it is not in accordance with the unwritten law of the House that it should be printed with as little delay as possible?

*Mr. SPEAKER: As a matter of respect to the House there ought to be no undue delay in the printing of Bills.

Mr. KELLY: The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) himself delayed printing a Bill which he had brought in.

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: I did nothing of the sort. The Marriages Bill, to which the hon. Member alludes, was printed and circulated immediately after its introduction. It was criticized by the Press long before the day fixed for the Second Reading, but it was blocked over and over again.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT—GRANTS IN AID.

Mr. PICKARD (Yorkshire, W. R., Normanton): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the last grant in aid to Local Authorities for maintenance of main roads was intended to cover expenses coming due for the financial year ending March, 1887; if so, whether, seeing the provisions of the "Local Government Act, 1888," could not take effect until the present year, the Government intend to make any further grant to Local Authorities for expenses coming due for the financial years 1888-9?

*The PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The last grant which was paid to Local Authorities for main roads was not in respect of expenses incurred in the financial year ended March, 1887, but in respect of those incurred in the financial year ended March, 1889. From the 1st of April last the maintenance of these roads has devolved on the County Authorities, and they have had ceded to them certain license and other duties in substitution for the grants previously paid on account of main roads.

THE TRUCK ACT.

Mr. PICKARD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that a breach of the Truck Act was ascertained to have taken place at Denby Grange Colliery, near Wakefield, as far back as January last, and then reported for prosecution; and, if he will state the reason for the delay which has since taken place?

*Mr. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; a careful inquiry was made into the matter by the Treasury Solicitor upon a Report from the local Inspector. There were, however, legal difficulties in instituting a prosecution upon the facts that could then be proved. I directed warning letters to be written to the owner and manager, and I have since received satisfactory assurances that no infringements of the Truck Act shall take place at this colliery in the future.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: May I ask whether some local solicitors were not actually instructed to prosecute in this case, and whether witnesses were not required to go over to them from the colliery and have their evidence taken down? Have not six months been allowed to lapse since, and does not such a disinclination to prosecute tend to bring the law into contempt?

*Mr. MATTHEWS: I must ask the hon. Member to give notice of that question.

ROYAL INDIAN ENGINEERING COLLEGE.

Mr. HUBBARD (Bucks, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if he will lay upon the Table a reprint of the prospectus of the Royal Indian Engineering College, Cooper's Hill, of the years 1871 and 1872, in which salary, absentee or furlough pay, and pension, were promised in rupees, or in pounds stirling, at the rate of £1 to 10 rupees?

Sir J. GORST: The prospectuses for the two years mentioned were identical. If the hon. Member will move for either one of them, it shall be laid on the Table.

Mr. HUBBARD: Is there any hope of having the Return before the debate, which is fixed for the 31st?

Sir J. GORST: I will lay the Return upon the Table on Monday next, but it must rest with the printers when it can be in the hands of Members.

THE CHESHIRE COUNTY CORONER.

Mr. RANDELL (Glamorganshire, Gower): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a statement in the *Labour Elector* of this week, to the effect that Mr. Henry Churton, County Coroner, Cheshire, who held an inquest on 15th and 22nd May on the body of Joseph Washburn, a workman who was killed at the works of Messieurs

Brunner, Mond, and Company, Limited, Northwich, Cheshire, is a shareholder in the said company; and if so, will he state what steps he proposes to take in the matter?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I will make further inquiry into the matter.

MR. C. GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.): Is it not the fact that on a previous occasion when a man was killed in these works the same coroner, who as a shareholder is, I presume, in the receipt of a dividend of 25 per cent, also officiated?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I am not aware whether that was so or not.

IRELAND—THE OLPHERT EVICTIONS

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is true, as stated in yesterday's *Daily News*, that Deputy Divisional Commissioner Cameron, who is in command of the police at Falcarragh, was called up to Dublin a few days ago, and was present at a conference in Dublin Castle when the subject of the ejectments on the Olphert Estate was under discussion; whether any pressure, direct or indirect, has been brought by the Government to bear on Mr. Olphert, having regard to the starving condition of his tenants, not to proceed to the extremity of evicting them from their homesteads; will military be employed at the evictions on the Glashercoo portion of the Olphert Estate to-morrow, and how many families, comprising how many individuals, are to be evicted; what is the sum total of the rent due from the tenants about to be so evicted; are the military in Falcarragh stationed partly in the workhouse of Dunfanaghy, which has been lent gratuitously to the Government by the Board of Guardians, of which Mr. Olphert is Chairman, and partly in Mr. Olphert's own house at Ballyconnell; and is Mr. Olphert paid by the Crown for the maintenance and lodging of the troops so billeted?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): This question is down without notice, and I am therefore unable to give any answer with respect to some of the matters about which the hon. Member inquires. As regards the first paragraph, I do not propose to answer any question concerning real and imaginary conversations between officials of the Irish Government. With regard to the second paragraph, no pressure, direct or indirect, has been brought by Government to bear on Mr. Olphert. I am not aware that any of the tenants are starving, and I believe that all the tenants who have been evicted during the year, or are to be evicted within the next few days, are perfectly able to pay their rent, and are only prevented from doing so by an illegal conspiracy. In addition to the reduction offered to all tenants on the estate, most liberal terms appear to have been offered by Mr. Olphert to the poorer tenants who appear unable to pay their debts to the landlord in full.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us when such liberal offers were made by Mr. Olphert, and whether that statement is not inconsistent with the sworn testimony on the occasion of my trial, when it was declared that no offer had been made since the 12th of December, 1888?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to give notice of that question.

MR. MACNEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last two paragraphs of the question now in reference to the military?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My answer is that if the military are required they will be there. If the hon. Member requires special information he must give me notice.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman said that Mr. Olphert has offered the most liberal terms to poor people who are unable to pay their rents, and he says that there are others who are able to pay their rents, but will not do so in consequence of an illegal conspiracy. Are both sets of tenants under notice of ejectment, and do the Government intend to insist in ejecting them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There will be no evictions at all unless the tenants refuse the terms which I have rightly described as liberal terms.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my question. Are there, as a matter of fact, ejectments pending in the case of the persons who are declared by the right hon. Gentleman to be unable to pay their rents?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Whether there are ejectments pending against persons who are unable to pay their rents, I cannot say. I understand that circulars containing the liberal terms offered by Mr. Olphert have been sent round among the tenantry. I also understand that there are to be no evictions in the case of persons unable to pay their rents. Most liberal reductions have been made to all the tenants, and, as I have stated already, "most liberal terms appear to have been offered by Mr. Olphert to the poorer tenants who appear unable to pay their debts to the landlord in full."

MR. CONYBEARE: Has Mr. Olphert offered more than 10 per cent reduction to his tenants?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My recollection is that more than 14 per cent has been offered to the judicial tenants irrespective of what was offered to the poorer tenants.

MR. T. M. HEALY: My question still remains unanswered. It is this. Are ejectments out against these persons?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know, though it is perfectly possible that there may be ejectments out.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Then my question is: Do the Government intend to carry out those ejectments?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: And my answer is—given more than once—that the ejectments are not going to be enforced by evictions.

MR. MAC NEILL: And my question to the Government is——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, Order!

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government have any objection to grant a Return relating to the income of Trinity College, Dublin, which stands on the Paper this day?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand there is no objection to give a Return showing the net as well as the gross income of the college. I do not think it would be possible or that it would be according to precedent to give a Return of the income of particular persons.

MR. W. MACDONALD: If a number of junior Fellows or Professors received different incomes, that fact cannot be shown in a Return.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a Return was laid on the Table a few days ago giving the income of every Professor in the Queen's Colleges at Belfast, Cork, and Galway?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no strict analogy between the case of the Queen's Colleges and Trinity College, Dublin.

THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION BILL.

MR. ARTHUR ACLAND (Yorkshire, W. R., Rotherham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state what facilities the Government are prepared to give for the Technical Education Bill, which was read a second time on the 8th of May?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The facilities which the Government will be able to afford to the Bill must largely depend upon the acceptance of our Amendments as to voluntary schools. I may add that the Government will be unable to give facilities for any Bill for which they are not themselves responsible until considerable additional progress has been made in Supply.

In further answer to Mr. A. ACLAND,

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have every hope that the Government Amendments will be put on the Paper before Whitsuntide, but, if not, very shortly after.

In answer to Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.),

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Undoubtedly the Amendments will be put upon the Paper before the House is asked to consider the Bill, and the hon. Gentleman, if he desires to do so, may impede the progress of the Bill after the Amendments have been laid upon the Table. I hope, however, the object being to promote technical education, that there will be a general disposition to further the progress of the Bill.

THE CASE OF THE PUPIL MARTIN.

MR. JOHN KELLY: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether his attention had been called to the case in which the London Society for the Prevention of

Cruelty to Children sent a formal notice to Mr. J. M. Jenkins, head master of an elementary school at Rye, in the following terms—

FORM XIV.

"This is to inform you that your conduct to your pupil Martin has been the subject of inquiry by this Society, and you are now warned to prevent the necessity for further proceedings. The object of this Society is to prevent cruelty, where monition fails, by prosecution, which it always undertakes with great reluctance. Your attention is called to s. 24 of 25 Vic. c. 100:"

Whether he is aware that such unsigned printed notice was sent through the post, and enclosed in an envelope bearing a conspicuous stamp of the London Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; and, whether, in view of the fact that discipline in elementary schools is made by the Education Code a condition of the earning of the grant, he will take steps, and, if so, what steps, to put an effectual check to such conduct on the part of the Society in question?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): I have no direct knowledge of the circumstances referred to, and no power on behalf of the Department to exercise any check on what certainly appears to be the ill-regulated zeal of the society in question.

METROPOLITAN CABS.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who is responsible as to the control and inspection of cab and cab horses in the Metropolis; if he is aware that old and dilapidated cabs and dangerous horses are frequently sent out after dark; and, if he will state if any periodical inspection is made; and certificates issued, as to the fitness of both cabs and horses?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Commissioner of Police has no control over cab horses, but he is responsible for the proper regulation and inspection of hackney and stage carriages. The Commissioner is not aware that the fact is as stated in the second paragraph. All cabs are inspected yearly on presentation for a license, and special night inspections have been for years made every month at uncertain intervals. Recently such inspections have been made every fortnight. If a cab is found unfit it is ordered out of work till the defects are repaired.

MR. H. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): Is there any Authority in the Metropolis which has control with respect to cab horses?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, I am not aware of any.

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. E. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is intended to take the Board of Agriculture Bill on Monday?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government must proceed with the Scotch Local Government Bills until the first and second of them have been read, and I fear, therefore, it will not be possible to take this Bill on Monday.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Can the Chief Secretary state what the arrangements before Whitsuntide are in reference to Irish Bills?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I deplore the delay which has occurred in the introduction of the Irish Bills, but I propose to bring them in by the middle of next week. To some extent it is an advantage that Bills should be introduced shortly before the holidays.

In answer to Mr. W. A. MACDONALD and Mr. BRADLAUGH,

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It is impossible in the middle of an adjourned debate to say when Supply will next be taken. As far as the Irish Estimates are concerned, the understanding is that the Estimates should be proceeded with in the order in which they stand; but I hope these Estimates will be taken before the holidays.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman give an assurance that they will not be taken on the Monday or Tuesday before the holidays?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It is impossible to give an assurance at this moment, but it is obviously necessary that we should finish one business before making arrangements for another.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): It would be convenient if the right hon. Getleman would state whether there is any possibility between this and Whitsuntide of taking the Scotch University Bill which has been spoken of as likely to be taken before Whitsuntide?

SIR G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): Will the right hon. Gentleman say at the same time in answer to the question of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) yesterday, when the Foreign Office Vote will be taken?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government propose to take the Vote on Account on the Tuesday before the holidays, and the Foreign Office Vote immediately afterwards, so as to allow sufficient time for its consideration. I have every hope of being able to take the Scotch University Bill before the holidays. The Parochial Councils Bill will be postponed until after the holidays.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Second Reading of the Scotch University Bill will give rise to considerable discussion.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): Does the right hon. Gentleman really propose to take the Vote on Account, and also to discuss the Foreign Office Vote, at a morning sitting between 2 and 7?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes; we certainly do. The Government have done their best to give opportunity for discussion in Supply, and have kept full faith with the House. The necessities of the Government require that this Vote shall be taken, as a Vote for two months only has already been taken, and this period has almost expired. As the Government intended to ask the House to give their attention to Supply, and have done everything in their power to facilitate business, I hope faster progress will be made with the Civil Service Estimates than has heretofore been made.

COASTGUARD STATIONS.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty how many Coastguard Stations there are around the coast of the United Kingdom, and how many of these are practically in connection (say within one mile distance) with postal telegraph stations?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Ealing): There are round the coast of the United Kingdom and Ireland 750 Coastguard Stations; of these 325 are within one mile of a postal telegraph office.

SLAVERY LAW CONSOLIDATION BILL. (No. 19.)

Order for Second Reading upon Monday next, read and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

COURT OF SESSION AND BILL CHAMBER (SCOTLAND) CLERKS [SALARIES].

Committee to consider of authorizing the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Salaries of certain Clerks and Officers of the Court of Session and Bill Chamber in Scotland, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to regulate the number and duties of the Clerks of the Court of Session and Bill Chamber in Scotland, and for other purposes (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Monday next.

MOTION.

SANITARY ACTS (METROPOLIS) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lawson, Bill to Amend and Extend the Sanitary Laws in force in the Metropolis, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lawson, Mr. James Stuart, and Earl Compton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 246].

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL. (No. 187.)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [23rd May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

*MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I propose to ask the attention of the House to one of the questions raised in this Bill—namely, the provisions which deal with the application of the Probate Duty to free education in Scotland. The House will remember the position in which we stand in reference to that question. Five days before the prorogation in December last, a Bill was introduced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the distribution of the Probate Duty in Scotland. We took objection to that Bill on the ground that it applied the money in Scotland, as has been done in England, to the reduction of rates, whereas we held that a more worthy and proper object was the reduction of school fees. The Chancellor of the Exchequer on that occasion gave three pledges to the Scotch

Members—first, that he would confine the Bill to the 31st March, 1889; that pledge has been kept. The second was that he would introduce his proposals in the Local Government Bill; that pledge has been redeemed also. The third pledge was that the Government and the House should remain entirely uncommitted to the principles of the Act then passed by the House. It was agreed on all sides to waive any criticism on the Bill at that time, on the distinct understanding that neither the Government nor the House were to be pledged as to the distribution of the money. That pledge has only been partially redeemed, and I propose to offer to Her Majesty's Government some considerations which may induce them to redeem that pledge in a full and satisfactory manner. I will not trouble the House at any length upon the question of free education, for the reason that in Scotland there exists an all but unanimous opinion in favour of free education, and the only obstacle to its adoption is the reluctance of the people to throw the cost upon the rates, because half the rates are paid by the owners of property, who will hardly obtain any advantage from its adoption. There is an opinion prevalent that the state of education in Scotland is highly satisfactory. I regret to say that is not the fact, because the figures given to us by the Government show there is an educational destitution of a serious character. There are 833,000 children of school age, and of these only 622,000 are on the register of any public elementary school. Only 75 per cent of the children of school age are on the register, while the average attendance is only 58. It is true that even with these deficiencies Scotland is slightly ahead of England, but the difference is only a small one, and measures are required to remove the educational destitution that now exists. I believe that the existence of excessive fees prevents children from being sent to school, and also prevents the School Boards from stringently using their compulsory powers, and thereby compelling parents to go *in forma pauperis* to the Parish Authorities. A bright side of the matter is the efficiency of the teachers in Scotland. This cannot be more clearly brought out than by comparing the average earnings per head, and these in Scotland are 18s. 4d. as against 17s. in England. That results in the very substantial gain to Scotland of £34,000 a year more than is gained by England for the relief of the rates. The best schools are those of the Free Church, which make 2os. 1¼d. a child; next came the Board Schools, 18s. 5d., then the Roman Catholics with 16s. 7½d., and then the Episcopalians 16s. 3½d. It is a remarkable fact that in Scotland the Episcopalians Schools are 3s. 10d. behind the Free Church Schools, and in England the Church of England Schools earn only 16s. 7¼d. as compared with 17s. 5d. earned by the children at the English Board schools. Not only is it satisfactory to find the earnings are so high, but they have been increasing, and still continued to grow. During the last fifteen years they have grown from 9s. 2d. to 18s. In the first triennial period the Government grant was 9s. 2d., in the second 14s. 8d., in the third 16s. 9d., in the fourth 17s. 5d., and in the last 18s. Thus there has been a continual growth. That is a satisfactory circumstance. I believe the Government is able, if it chooses, to abolish school fees, not only in respect to the first three standards, but for the higher also in all schools in Scotland. The Government are in a position to do this for four years, on the assumption that there is no increase in the Imperial grant over that of 1886-7. The total fees that have to be paid in the current year amounted to £310,000, of which £290,000 will be paid by the parents, and £20,000 by the Parochial Boards. That can be met very easily. The Government had at their command £557,000 from the Probate Duties and from licenses. The grants in 1886-7 amounted to £287,000. That leaves a balance of £270,000. If the Government adhere to the basis of the grant of 1886-87 they will have at least £260,000 of that £270,000 that they might apply to free education. Supposing they postpone the abolition of fees until 1st January, 1890, three-quarters of the financial year would give them a sum of £190,000 in hand, and that would suffice to pay all the fees for four years. There are some grounds on which the House should press the Government to devote the whole share of the Probate Duties to fees. For instance, they are adopting only a half

measure, in allocating the entire sum neither to rates nor to the abolition of fees. In doing this they will give satisfaction neither to the ratepayers nor to those who pay fees. They should take the whole of the money for one purpose or the other. One reason why the fees should have a preferential claim on any money coming from the Probate Duty is to be found in the educational condition of Scotland, as it existed from the Reformation till 1872, during which period the land was liable to contribute towards the maintenance of the parish scholars. The real argument against the scheme of the Government, however, is this: that by applying this money for the rates they produce a result which is absolutely inappreciable to nine-tenths of the population. Suppose, for the sake of argument, that the Government devote £100,000 to the relief of the poor rate in Aberdeen, the proportion in that city being very much the same as in other Scottish towns. By giving £100,000 to the poor rate, out of a total of 22,000 ratepayers, 7,700 will get an average benefit of 1½d. per annum; 9,900 will get an average benefit of 3¾d. per annum; 3,470 will get 7d.; 1,200 will get 1s. 4d.; 360 will get 2s. 10d.; and 38 will get a little more. When, therefore, they place such a result as this in competition with the abolition of school fees, the proposal of the Government appeared to be absolutely ridiculous. What is the result of abolishing school fees? To a man, say with three children, the benefit of abolishing fees is £1 19s. a year, whereas under the scheme of relieving the local rates a benefit of only 1½d. would be obtained. I think also there are grave objections to stopping relief at the Third Standard, and great inconvenience must arise from it. If we have to make a choice, I think that, from an educational point of view, we should remove the fees from the higher rather than the lower standards. One of the traditions of Scotland is that parents have always made great sacrifices in order to give their children as good an education as they possibly can, That is a noble tradition, and there is nothing more prejudicial to its maintenance than lowering the recognized standards as it is now proposed to do. Selfish parents would take advantage of the arrangement and keep their children in the lower standards instead of urging them on to the higher. The Government scheme certainly gives an interest to keep children back — it gives a motive and direct incentive to retard their educational progress. How is the scheme going to affect the School Boards? In the last 15 years the amount of Government grant has doubled. To a large extent it has been earned by the higher standards, and if, under this scheme children are taken away from these standards, School Boards may actually in the end lose more money by the diminution of the grant than they would by paying the fees out of the rates. There is one duty to be thrown on the School Boards, to which I take great objection. The Parochial Boards are no longer to pay the fees of children whose parents are unable to pay, but when the children reach the Fourth Standard it will be necessary to make some provision for the children who formerly received their fees from the Parochial Boards. That is to be done by the School Board. They are to hold an inquisition and select the children whom they will educate without fee. I do not envy them the discharge of that duty; it is casting upon them a difficult and inviduous task that it will be impossible for them to discharge with universal satisfaction. It is casting on them a duty they might well be spared As to the position of the poorer children, it is estimated that £155,000 would be required for the three standards. For the present that might be enough, but it is very doubtful whether in the near future it will be sufficient, for it was possible the School Boards may not be so stringent and exacting as the Parochial Boards. That leads me to mention a fact of a most alarming and instructive character in regard to education. It is this, that during recent years there has been an enormous and rapid growth of the sums paid by the Parochial Boards, and a large increase in the number of pauper children. During the last 12 years the average attendance of children at the Board Schools has increased by 3 per cent per annum That is satisfactory, because the natural increase of the population has been only 1 per cent, and it shows that we are overtaking our educational destitution. But while the annual increase in average attendance

has been 3 per cent, the increase in the number of pauper children has been 11 per cent. Between 1874-76 the average amount paid was £3,801, and the number of children 10,114; in 1886-88 the amount was £17,198, and the number of children 31,437. That melancholy fact is explained by the growing amount of the fees and diminution of the self-respect of the parents. Contact with the Parochial Board is not a salutary education. I think there is only one reason that would justify the Government stopping short at the three standards, and that is that they have not the money to go further. How does it stand? The Government can easily pay the whole fees if they adopt the plan I have suggested, and make no new grants. They have since 1887 introduced new grants to the extent of £85,000. £20,000 of that went to the Parochial Boards. That in itself is about one of the most unobjectionable grants that can be devised, but it is nearly equal to the sum paid by the Parochial Boards to the School Boards in respect to pauper children. If the Parochial Boards were relieved of the payment of the £20,000 it might well be said that they should not get the grant from the Imperial Exchequer. The next grant was that of £30,000 for the Highlands, which is one of about the most monstrous kind that could be suggested, but it has gone down because "Highlands" and "grant" seem to some minds to naturally go together. I complain strongly of the Government that up to the present time when they are asking the House to assent to the Second Reading of this Bill, they have withheld all detailed inquiries with respect to the distribution of this £30,000. My hon. Friend the Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow (Mr. Caldwell) induced the Government to agree to a Return, but I imagine the figures will not be in our hands for some weeks yet—until we have concluded the discussion upon this Bill. It is, therefore, difficult to indicate with precision how the £30,000 has been disposed. £2,721 has been given to the Scotch Education Department, who have given it to the schools in the Highlands. It has been given as a bribe to weak-kneed School Boards to hand over the control of education to the Government Inspector, and to substitute the Government Inspector for the School Board. The School Board are to appoint a Committee of two persons to act with Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools. It is, however, provided that if there is any difference of opinion between the Inspector and the other two members of the Committee, the opinions of the majority is not to prevail, but the question is to be referred to the Education Department. In the next place, £22,000 is to be given for the relief of the poor rates. What I complain of is that the Government do not give us the figures to enable us to understand who are the persons who are going to get this money. I am left to make a conjecture, and the conjecture I make is based upon the four parishes which are mentioned in the Crofter Commissioners' Report, and which are supposed to be typical of the parishes in the Highlands, and I find that of the £22,000, £11,000 goes at one fell swoop into the pockets of the landlords, £5,250 goes, in the first instance, to the large sheep farmers, but of course when the leases expire this sum also goes to the landlords, and £2,000 goes to the shooting and fishing tenants in the first place, but ultimately, of course, to the landlords. Of £22,000, therefore, you are giving £18,250 to the landlords directly or indirectly. The remainder goes to the crofters. The reductions of rents by the Crofter Commissioners in the two years of work amount to £7,342. It will be admitted under these circumstances that the Government are doing very well for their landlord friends in the Highlands. I ask what ground can there be for the landlords in the Highlands coming in an eleemosynary fashion, begging alms in the respect of money which belongs to the whole of the Scottish people. I know of no claim which either the shooting tenants or the landlords or the big farmers have except that they are a perpetual source of disturbance in the Highlands, and a considerable cause of disorder and confusion. I invite hon. Gentlemen opposite to consider the position they will be in when they have to face their constituents at a General Election. You have not abolished the school fees for the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Standards. Why? Because you want the money to make a gift to the landlords in the Highlands. So much for

the grant to the Highlands. The next grant which the Government propose to give is upwards of £34,000 to the roads, £30,000 to the counties, and £4,000 to the burghs. It is a remarkable fact that although we have had two speeches from the Government Bench, we have not heard a single argument in favour of the grant to the roads. The road grant was originally introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), and 1882-3 was the first year it appeared in the Local Taxation Return. The concession which was made by the right hon. Gentleman was a concession, at all events, to necessity if not to conviction. A Motion had been carried by Sir Massey Lopes in favour of a Government grant to local rates, and I daresay that if he had been willing to do so the right hon. Gentleman was not strong enough to resist the cry of the rural landlord for a subsidy from the State. If we were to do justice to the people of Scotland we would take that £34,000 and give it in aid of education. It is most important if you propose new grants to consider how the existing Imperial grants stands in relation to owners and occupiers and to the distinction between burghs and counties. If you have any Imperial grants at all they ought to be distributed impartially between owners and occupiers, counties or burghs. We find a remarkable contrast. In the counties substantially the whole of the rates are paid by the owners of property; in the burghs nearly the whole of the rates are paid by occupiers. What is the proportion of the Government grants to the counties respectively? 39 per cent to the counties and 7 per cent to the burghs. The figures are these:—County rates paid by owners, £156,000, by occupiers £7,000, and Government grant £68,188; burgh rates paid by landlords, £183,000, by occupiers, £1,165,000, and Government grants, £93,000. So that you have a proportion of 7 per cent in the burghs as against a proportion of 39 per cent in the counties. Therefore, at the present moment the counties have actually 4½ times more than their fair share of Imperial grants. It is the same with regard to the police. 48 per cent of the entire cost of the police in the counties is paid by the Government grant as against 40 per cent in the burghs, although the ratable value in the counties is much higher than the ratable value in the burghs. The same disproportion is observable with regard to the roads. You give nearly £31,000 to the counties and only £3,400 to the burghs. The proportion of the Government grant in respect to the roads in 1886-7 was, in in the counties 9 per cent and in the burghs 2·5 per cent, so that the counties got almost four times as much in proportion as the burghs. But that is not by any means the worst of it, because I am omitting the expense of the streets, which are to the burghs precisely what the roads are to the counties. When you take the streets into account you find that the proportion of assistance given to the burghs for the maintenance of the roads is ·73 per cent, whereas in the counties it is 9 per cent. In other words, it is 13 times as much in the counties as in the burghs. I venture to think that even the Government, when they come to look at the thing, will hesitate before they ask the House to adopt such a strange distribution of the money. I wish to touch upon the question of what are erroneously called the denominational schools. The distinction in Scotland is not between denominational schools and undenominational schools, but between schools under popularly-elected Boards and schools under private management. With some exceptions, I think all the Board Schools are denominational. On the other hand, some of the schools which have private managers are undenominational. I mention the distinction because, probably, it does not exist in England, and it is important to bear in mind that we are not dealing with the question of denominational education at all, but with the contrast between those schools which are controlled by the public and those which are controlled by private individuals. There is another marked distinction between the schools in England and those in Scotland. In Scotland 82½ per cent of the children attend the Board Schools, and only 17½ per cent are to be found in other schools. In England the proportion of children in Board Schools is only 36½ per cent. The schools not under School Boards in Scotland may be divided into three classes—namely, schools which are increasing in number, schools which are

stationary in number, and schools which are diminishing in number, and being constantly transferred to the School Boards. The last class—the excellent schools, the best schools in Scotland—belong to the Established Church, the Free Church, and to the class called undenominational. A marked feature about this excellent class of schools is that the process of transferring them to the School Boards has been going on spontaneously and uninterruptedly for the last fifteen years. In 1874 there were 883 schools of this character under private control, and this year there are 300, and the proportion of these schools to Board Schools, which was 65 per cent in 1874, is now only 11 per cent. These are the crack schools of Scotland, but they are characterized by high fees, and would, therefore, receive very little benefit from the scheme of Her Majesty's Government. I will just refer to the case of the Free Church Schools to show that the amount of the voluntary contributions in Scotland has diminished both absolutely and relatively—absolutely from £40,000 to £29,000 in 15 years, and relatively in this way, that the proportion of the income of the schools derived from voluntary contributions is every year getting smaller and smaller. The Free Church Schools are an extreme example of this tendency. In the Free Church Schools only four per cent of the entire cost of education is obtained by voluntary contributions. Another important fact is that during the 15 years there has been a continued tendency to increase the fees, and both in the voluntary schools and the Board Schools the whole energy of the managers has been directed towards the increase of the Government grant, so that in the one case they may spare the rates and the other spare the voluntary contributions. Thus, while the fees have increased steadily during these years, the voluntary contributions have diminished every year at the rate of 2·8 per annum. This has been a constant decrease. These are some of the reasons why I think that by the end of four years the schools may have been entirely transferred to the School Boards. The reason why I fix on the term of four years is not because I suggest that it would be right to pay denominational schools for four years and not right to pay them afterwards, but because, in the peculiar circumstances in which Scotland stands at the present time, you have influences at work which are gradually solving the question of voluntary schools without any assistance from Parliament. Then comes the question of the Episcopalian and the Roman Catholic Schools. There are some reasons why we may hope that even these schools may ultimately be brought under the control of the ratepayers. Though the voluntary subscriptions are diminishing in these cases, still those subscriptions form a considerable amount of the incomes of the schools. These schools are less efficient than the ordinary schools, and their average attendance is not so high, whilst the teachers have lower salaries. Under these circumstances, I think these schools will be pressed on the one hand by the competition of the Board Schools and Free Schools, and on the other by the burden of the voluntary subscriptions and by the want of efficiency. There can be no question that if these schools were transferred to the School Boards they would become as efficient as the Board Schools are at the present time—that is to say, their efficiency would increase by 12 per cent. The Episcopalian Schools are stationary in number, and the Roman Catholic Schools have doubled in 15 years. Let me inquire into the reason for this. I find that out of the total number of children attending the Roman Catholic Schools no less than 21 per cent pay no fees whatever—that is to say, that the Roman Catholic schools are actually competing with the Protestant Schools at the present time by offering 21 per cent of their accomodation free of charge to the poor children Fourteen per cent of the remaining fees are paid by the Parochial Boards, and it is a most remarkable fact that the Roman Catholic Schools display a marvellous skill, in the first place, in inducing the Parochial Boards to pay for so many of the children, and in the second place in inducing them to pay more for the poor children than is paid for the children whose fees are provided by the parents. It is a most remarkable fact that while the Roman Catholics in Scotland obtained 12s. 5d. per child from the Parochial Boards, the School Board only got 10s. 8d. for the same class of children, notwithstanding the fact that whilst the School

Boards charge parents an average of 13s. 11d., the Roman Catholics charge parents only 10s. 8d.—a difference of more than 3s. Therefore, while in the Board Schools the children whose fees are paid by the Parochial Boards may be regarded as almost the paupers of the Schools, in the Roman Catholic Schools the children whose fees are so paid may be looked upon as the aristocracy of the schools. There is another fact still more extraordinary, and that is that in the rapid growth of the sums paid by the Parochial Board, the Roman Catholics have more than the fair share. While the amount paid to the ordinary schools has only doubled, it has in the case of the Roman Catholics trebled, so that we have come to this, that no less than 35 per cent of the fees paid in the Catholic Schools are paid by the parochial funds or out of voluntary subscriptions. It is remarkable that with an inferior class of schools and an inferior average attendance, the Roman Catholic Schools do as well as they do. Under all these disadvantages they actually earn a trifle more per head from the Government grant than the Church of England Schools in England. Now, I think it is important that the Government should have fully before them the financial effects of their proposals, and the reasons that induce us to press upon them that they should give the whole of this grant for free education. Public opinion is not only generally, but strongly in favour of the application to fees of all the money the Government may fairly apply. I think the Government may take their stand upon the Imperial grants of 1886-7, and taking their stand on that they are in a position to abolish fees for four years. Then, at the end of that period what is to happen? I do not fear to face the question. In the first place, I apprehend by increased attendance and by other causes earnings from the Government grant will be much larger than they are at the present moment; but if at the end of four years they are not quite equal to the amount of fees, then let the balance be made up from the rates. £50,000 a year is only a farthing in the £, and thus a £10 occupation would only mean twopence halfpenny in the £ a year; therefore the increase of the school rate, if it were required—and I am not certain that it would be required—would be so small that it is not worth taking into account; and I am perfectly sure that if the Scotch people have known the advantages of free education for four years, they are not likely to part with it or scruple to take the necessary balance from a school rate. I am sorry to have detained the House so long, and am grateful for the indulgence shown me. I trust the Government will deal with us in the amicable spirit in which we have dealt with them. I have not used language of a threatening or an intimidatory character. I have appealed entirely to facts that are known, that are, at all events, within the knowledge of the Government, and I trust they will be able to give way as to the three higher standards as for the three lower, and the Government may rest assured they will not suffer in popular estimation in Scotland by so doing.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): No one, I am sure, can complain of the way in which the hon. Gentleman has dealt with this question, which we all know he has much at heart, in the speech delivered to-day; and although he apologized for the length of his speech, I do not think we have any grounds for complaint, looking at the large number of points he had to allude to. It is, of course, very satisfactory to the House to know from the opening sentences of the hon. Gentleman's speech that the condition of education in Scotland is of so satisfactory a character; and for myself, as a Scotchman, I take pride in the knowledge that we have no reason to fear comparison in this respect with our neighbours in England or elsewhere. The proposition of the hon. Gentleman is that the whole of the available money over and above the grants for the year 1886-7 should be devisable for educational purposes, rather than that it should be limited to the amount of £171,000, such as we propose to appropriate to that purpose. I was rather anxious for the hon. Gentleman to come to the point at which he was to explain at once how he would deal with the question when he comes to the end of the first four years, for he started by asserting that even if we took the whole of the money it would not be available under present circumstances for a longer period than four years. At the end of his

speech the hon. Gentleman explained—and broadly, I may say, his explanation amounted to this—that he expected that at the end of four years voluntary schools would probably be abolished.

*MR. HUNTER: I drew a distinction between the Established Church and the Free Church denominations which might possibly be transferred, and the Episcopalian and Roman Catholic Schools, of which I am not sanguine.

MR. RITCHIE: No; I expect the hon. Gentleman in his reference to Roman Catholic Schools was influenced by political considerations somewhat. I can understand the difficulty he would have been in had he attempted to advocate the abolition of Roman Catholic Schools. But I do not care whether they are Roman Catholic Schools or other schools so far as I am concerned. I should regard any system which would abolish denominational education with a very considerable amount of regret. I do not imagine that the general bulk of the community would regard with satisfaction any system which would put an end to the voluntary system of education. Certainly so far as we in England are concerned, I should regard such a consummation with apprehension and alarm. Passing away from that particular question, I will endeavour to deal with some of the points raised by the hon. Gentleman. I am sure he will not expect, nor will the House expect, that I should enter into the great mass of detail he entered into, and which from his point of view he was justified in doing, for it is clear to me that if we are to make progress with the debate at this stage, we must apply ourselves generally to large principles not devoting an undue amount of time to minute particulars more properly to be dealt with at another stage. The speech of the hon. Gentleman advocated in the strongest possible form the principle of free education, and I will only say at once that is not the point of view from which the Government regard what has been done in reference to their proposal. As the House knows our original proposal was to allocate the whole of the balance to the relief of the ratepayers, following in that respect the method we have pursued in reference to England. Now, it is well known that for years past there has been a great cry in all parts of England as to the burden of local rates, and as to the fact that the great bulk of the burden rested upon the shoulders of a particular kind of property owners. Every year the demand has been raised, and I think with the assent of the great majority of the people, that the rates should be supplemented by contributions from personal property, and that was the principle we followed in reference to the grants made in England. We allocated a certain sum of money, all derivable from personal property, in aid of local rates, and thus yielded to the demand made in England for many years. We felt that the proper course in dealing with a similar condition of things in reference to Scotland was to follow the precedent we had set in England. It was well known, in regard to our proposals of last year, we were following the general wish in allocating the whole balance which might arise to the aid of local rates; but we cannot disguise from ourselves that the feeling which has undoubtedly been great in England with reference to relief from local taxation, and to the sources from which it should come, does not exist to anything like the same extent in Scotland, and, while we felt, and still think, that the proposal originally made was perfectly sound and justifiable, we could not, and did not, feel ourselves able to resist the demand made upon us—and not from one part of the House only—by Members representing Scotch constituencies, that it would be more acceptable that whatever balance should exist should go to the relief of school fees, and so from that point of view we have dealt with the money, not because we wish to propose any great scheme of free education, but because we are driven to the criticism which is forced upon us, that the Scottish people prefer to have the balance go to school fees rather than to the relief of the local rates. But I am not at all sure whether a feeling such as that which exists towards a sum of money which has never been in the pockets of the ratepayers at all, which is, as it were, something newly discovered, would also exist in reference to a large sum to be taken out of the ratepayers' pockets. It is one thing to allocate a new gift with the assent of the ratepayers, but it is another thing to take away a large sum pre-

viously enjoyed and applied by the ratepayers to the relief of their local rates. I view with apprehension the growth of the practice of children going to the Parochial Board for relief from school fees, while I am glad to think that, so far as the proposals we have made are concerned, the taint of having to make application to Parochial Boards for relief will be altogether removed. It is a mode of dealing with the question with which nobody is satisfied, and it is a matter of great satisfaction to us that the Bill provides the means by which this contamination, as it has been called, will cease. The hon. Gentleman gave figures by which he showed that the amount of relief for fees had trebled in 14 years, but the honourable Gentleman must not suppose that anything like the number of children who now go to the Parochial Board will go to the school managers for relief for fees, for I am sure he knows perfectly well that the enormous majority of children who go to the Parochial Boards for relief fees are above the Third Standard. When it is remembered that in the ordinary Board School about two-thirds of the children are below the Third Standard, it will be seen that even taking the average number of children in the schools as a criterion, not more than a third of those who go to the Parochial Board will have to go to the school manager and demand the inquiry which the hon. Member deprecates into their ability to pay or not to pay. But even this one-third is considerably more than are likely to go under ordinary circumstances, because no doubt the great majority of these children are in the poorer schools ; but at any rate this is undoubted, that out of this large number of 31,000, which the hon. Member says now go to the Parochial Boards, certainly not more than 10,000 will go under the circumstances of the Bill, and in all probability not nearly so many. The hon. Gentleman, in telling us how this money should be found, deals first with the item of £30,000 for the Highlands, and a good deal was said about this yesterday. I do not think any hon. or right hon. Gentleman advocated the abolition of this grant altogether ; but what they did advocate was that, instead of it coming from Scottish money, it should come from Imperial money ; that if the need is shown in these Highland districts, and that need arises from poverty, then relief should come from the Imperial Exchequer, not from the local funds of Scotland, and this, I find, receives assent in this quarter of the House as well as that. But I think there is a strong argument why this money should come from local, not Imperial funds. It will be seen, when the House is in possession of how the different counties will be affected by the giving up to them of the Licensing Duties, that while, as a whole, there will be a gain of £28,000—the hon. Gentleman said, I think, that the licenses would equal the grant, but that is not quite so —it will be seen, taking Scotland as a whole, that while the great majority of counties will gain rateably, at the same time some of the counties, instead of gaining, will absolutely lose by the substitution, because the licenses collected in these particular counties are not proportionately so large as the licenses collected in an ordinary county, and it will be found that these are the very counties which participated in the grant of £30,000 to the Highlands. This giving of £30,000 will be putting these counties in the same relative position as the other counties will be in. If that be true, surely it is a strong argument that the £30,000 should come out of the common purse for Scotland, that purse being made up by amounts for distribution in lieu of grants to the Scottish people. I do not see how the philanthropic views of hon. Gentlemen can meet that argument and claim that this £30,000 should come from the Exchequer. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hunter) went on to criticize one or two items in this £30,000 severely, and one of these was the grant in aid of education, which he stated — and there he departed, I think, from the general tone of his observations—was given to weak-kneed School Boards in order to secure Government control, and also in relief of the poor rate. But I think he must be aware of the fact that the schools were in a hopeless state of insolvency. I am not going to enter into the question of how it arose. Perhaps it might be shown, and I think there is good reason for thinking it could be shown, that it was mainly in consequence of the extravagance of the School Boards themselves. However it may be, it looked as if the

cause of education had come to hopeless ruin, and the Government thought to prevent such a catastrophe it was desirable to give a grant, and, of course, with that they were bound to take care the money was properly administered. Now, so far as the landlords are concerned, no doubt—looking at the fact that the landlords, owing to the hopeless condition of these particular districts, had the weight of the rates—as the hon. Gentleman must be perfectly well aware, the condition of the landlords in some of these Highland parishes was deplorable in the extreme. Speaking in February last year my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland made this statement—

"The rates in the parish of Lochs, supposing them to be paid, would be 11s. 6d. in the £ on the present rents, including the shooting rents. If they abolished the latter the rates would rise to 21s. in the £; and if they were, in addition, to destroy every farm above £30 rental, the rates would rise from 11s. 6d. to about 24s."

That is *à propos* of what the hon. Gentleman said in reference to the shooting rents. Therefore, whether regarded from the point of view of the rates or relief of the burden thrown by the poverty of the district on the landlords, or in reference to the shooting, I maintain my case is absolutely unanswerable. The hon. Gentleman then proceeded to say that if we are only to give the money which we are now giving for the relief of school fees, then he would rather begin at the top of the standards than at the bottom. Well, that is not our view. It is the poorer class of poor parents who would feel the relief most, and it is among the children of this class that there is the greatest difficulty of securing school attendance. If we were to adopt the theory of the hon. Gentleman and apply the grant to the higher standards, there would be no relief to the poorer class, who most need it. Another item the hon. Gentleman desired to lay hold of was the £34,000 for roads. I do not propose to go into all the various items he criticized, but with reference to this I maintain what I said at the commencement of my observations. We do not think we should be justified in dipping into the ratepayers' pockets and advocating for other purposes sums which have gone to the relief of their local burdens. The hon. Gentleman suggests that we should take the £34.000 from roads for education, and he draws attention to the amount of difference in the relief to burghs and to counties so far as the grant is concerned. I am prepared to admit that the relief to counties is larger than the relief to burghs, and so it has always been in England. There are many towns in England that for years past have not derived any benefit at all from the grants given for road relief, but it has been recognized in England, and I cannot for the life of me see how it can possibly be denied; that the great roads through the country are as much for the convenience of the towns as for that of the country districts.

*MR. HUNTER: The streets of a town are as much for the benefit of the surrounding country as for that of the inhabitants of the town.

MR. RITCHIE: I do not admit that at all. If you take the ratepaying farmer in the country, and estimate what his liabilities are in connection with roads, you will find that what he has to pay is infinitely more onerous than the payments of the ratepayers in town, even taking into account all the streets of the town. But this is not the time to pursue these details. As every point the hon. Gentleman has raised against our proposals was put forward in favour of free education, we have endeavoured to fairly allocate the balance at our disposal, allowing the ratepayers to retain the relief they have always received. We do not feel it is possible for us to go further. And now I must allude to some of the speeches made last evening. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling, while on the whole he was inclined rather favourably to criticize the main proposals of the Government, somewhat unnecessarily endeavoured to minimize he general effect of the Bill. I must say I was astonished at the capacity he evinced for legislation when he complained that along with the four Bills the House is called upon to deal with, we have not submitted the Burgh Police Bill with its hundreds of clauses.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I merely quoted the expression of the Government themselves.

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, but the right hon. Gentleman expressed himself as disappointed because we had not pro-

duced that Bill. The broad principle of our Bill is that we transfer the government of the counties from representatives of property to representatives of all classes of the ratepayers. That of itself is a sufficiently great change to deserve the commendation and approval of the right hon. Gentleman, but I find, looking to the speeches which have been delivered by hon. Members opposite, that that is not at all sufficient for their purposes. They are not satisfied with that. They want the government of counties transferred, not from one class of ratepayers to another, but from the ratepayers to non-ratepayers. ["No, no."] I would like to understand this. The right hon. Member for Berwickshire told us that three-fourths of his constituents were service voters.

MR. MARJORIBANKS: I said that three-fourths of the new voters were service voters.

MR. RITCHIE: The increase, of which the right hon. Member says three-fourths are service voters, is very much larger than the original number. Therefore, looking at the rapid increase to which the right hon. Gentleman referred, we can very easily find out when the service voters will be in a majority, if that moment has not yet arrived. I understand from the right hon. Gentleman that that period has already arrived. The proposal with reference to the service voters is that they should be empowered to deal with the ratepayers' money, they themselves not being in any shape or form liable to the rates. I should like to know how it is possible for the service voters to feel the rise and fall of the rates. After all, the great test, as far as the administration of the rates is concerned, is whether those who have to administer the affairs for which the rates are necessarily liable feel the rise or fall which may be attributable to any step they may consider it necessary to take. I do not know that it is altogether impossible, if the landlords desire that the service voters should be admitted to the franchise, for them to make arrangements which would secure that end. I think it may very well be that, if the landlord is to be relieved of the greater portion of the rate, he should add something to the service voters' wages to enable the service voter to undertake the increased liability. In that case the service voter would feel the rise and fall of taxation, and that is absolutely necessary if you are going to entrust him with the power of making rates. Great objection has been taken to the constitution of the Standing Committee, which is to administer the affairs of the police and to have a voice in capital expenditure. I think the question of the police may be divided into the two subjects of expenditure and the maintenance of law and order. With reference to the expenditure, it must be remembered that the whole cost of the police in the county falls upon the owners. That being so, it does not seem to be a very extraordinary thing that we should provide that one-half of the new body that is to control the expenditure should be composed of those who pay the whole of the rate. The question has been asked, "Why not, as you do in the burghs, give the control of the police to popularly elected bodies?" It is quite true that in the burghs the Town Councils, which have the control of the police, represent the occupiers. But, then, the whole control of the police in burghs is borne by the occupiers. With regard to the question of law and order, I am not myself disposed to regard with equanimity the handing over of the discharge of law and order from a body that has for years done its work well to an entirely new body, constituted in an entirely different way. Here, again, I do not think the analogy of the burghs holds good. In the burghs you have a small and homogeneous body that has been for years past accustomed to the administration of justice, and in the counties you have a widely-scattered population held together by no such bonds as the population in the burghs, and which has not been accustomed to deal with questions of this kind. So that, whether you regard the question from the point of view of the maintenance of law and order, or from the point of view of expenditure, I say that the proposal to transfer the control of the police from the owners to a body composed half of owners and half of occupiers, is a broad and liberal proposal, and I am bound to say that from that proposal we cannot recede. I know my right hon. Friend opposite strongly objects to the Sheriff being Chairman of the Committee. My right hon. Friend

knows, however, that the Sheriff is at present by Statute a Member of the County Police Committee, and, further, that he is the officer who is responsible for law and order in the county, and that he has the control of the police. We did not think it an unnatural thing that a gentleman occupying that position by Statute should also preside over the Police Committee. I do not suppose, however, that this is a matter of the greatest importance. Now, Sir, I do not propose to go into the mass of detailed criticism brought before the House yesterday, because I regard most of the points raised as matters for discussion in Committee. Having dealt with the three main objections raised against our scheme, I revert to what I said at the beginning of my remarks. The Bill we have introduced is one of a far-reaching character, and although the powers we propose to transfer may not be as great as some hon. Members desire, what we have to do with is the constitution of a body that will undertake the powers which it is thought ought to be transferred. It was stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) that there was no enthusiasm about the Bill in Scotland. But perhaps the enthusiasm which would be created by the adoption of his suggestions in one part of the community would be counterbalanced by a very different feeling in another part of the community. The Government do not think it militates against their proposals because they are not received with enthusiasm. We have dealt plainly and in a straightforward manner with the whole subject, and have endeavoured to keep out the sensational element altogether. We have been particularly anxious not to overload the Bill unnecessarily by introducing such questions as that of licensing, which would have raised much discussion and difference of opinion, and might have very seriously imperilled the passing of the measure. The Bill is founded on a broad and popular basis, and, as such, the Government believe it will find acceptance at the hands of the Scottish people.

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR (Clackmannan, &c.): In dealing with the first of his three points, it appeared to me that the right hon. Gentleman, who has just sat down, transgressed the canon laid down by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs, and accepted on his own side of the House by the Secretary for Ireland that the question should be viewed from a Scottish and not from an English standpoint. At least three times in the course of his speech the right hon. Gentleman, in dealing with education, told the House that the genesis of the allocation of the grant was an English precedent. He said, in the first place, that a certain amount of dissatisfaction had been felt in England at the pressure upon the ratepayers, and, following that precedent, that it had been at first proposed in Scotland to make an allocation that would relieve the Scotch ratepayers in a manner analogous to that in which the English ratepayers had been relieved; but finding that Scotch opinion had a different destination for the money, the Government now proposed so to allocate it to education by way of concession to that opinion. What the Lord Advocate laid down as to this matter appeared to me to be a much safer standard and guide. He said that in England the pressure of taxation was felt by a particular class of persons, and that an analogous pressure was not felt in Scotland, but that another burden was severely felt there, to wit, the education rate, and that where the shoe pinched the relief would be given, though the grievances of the two countries differed. I think that a sound canon to apply. We do not complain of having got so much as we have—we are glad of it; but what the hon. Member for Aberdeen contended for, and what, I think, is a sound contention, was, that the same principle should be carried a little further, because, as it happens, it stops short of the more important point and leaves a large part of the existing grievance with fresh difficulties and grounds of complaint not present before. It was on that question that the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeen was based. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has not met the points raised by the hon. Member in his admirable speech, which, I trust, will appear in a form which will enable the statistics contained in it to be readily referred to in Scotland hereafter. The right hon. Gentleman spoke as if other requirements were to be first satis-

fied, and only the unallocated balance was to go to education. I venture to think it would be more sound, still applying the same canon, to give relief in the first place in those directions where it is most required, and to apply the balance, if any balance remains, to the other purposes mentioned. The figures seemed to show that, without going to the rates at all for free education, the application of the total grant, with some handling, by no means difficult, would, for a measurable number of years, practically give free education. This plan would not be open to the objection of merely dealing incidentally and accidentally with the appropriation of the grant towards freeing education, but would carry out consistently and completely the principle which has been largely conceded on this point. The Chief Secretary for Ireland said last night that there were £171,000 available under the proposal of the Government for school purposes, but £155,000 of that, I think he said, would be needed to cover the first three standards, which would leave £16,000 available for freeing the other standards as far as it would go, but very far short of freeing them entirely. There was one part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech with which I agree, though I draw from it a different conclusion from that which he founded upon it. He said, and said truly, that in Scotland it has been felt a misfortune that it should be necessary to go to the Parochial Boards for the purpose of asking them who should have free education. The right hon. Gentleman used in connection with this the word "taint"—a phrase not uncommonly applied, as it is felt by many of the industrious poor that to go to the Parochial Board for relief from school fees, infers a contact with pauperism. I agree with him in that. But the plan by which, under the Bills, certain free places are to be provided in the standards above the third will throw upon the School Boards a new function for which they were not brought into existence and for which they are not well adapted. Under the present system, it is the duty of the Parochial Board, for their own purposes, to wit, the administration of the Poor Law, to inform themselves of the circumstances of parents and to make that information available for deciding who shall get relief from school rates. Under the proposal explained by th eChief Secretary, a precisely analogous function is to be thrown on the School Boards, and they are to say who shall be the recipients of the free places and who shall not. How is the School Board to get that information? Is it to go to the Parochial Board? Or is the School Board to set up a machinery to inquire into the circumstances and ability of parents to pay for their children in the higher standards? The balance of this money—the £16,000—would go a long way towards obviating this difficulty. Moreover, I object to the plan on the ground that it would give a kind of Parliamentary sanction to the notion that the Third Standard is high enough. If the State provides money for education, why should it stop short at the Third Standard? Surely the fact of its stopping there would have the effect of injuring the higher standards by inducing parents to keep their children in those standards which are paid for, instead of stimulating them to rise to those which are not paid for. I say nothing more on that head. I should now like to make a few general remarks upon these Bills as we have them before us, indicating the lines on which it appears to me they should be amended—for it seems to me the duty of all hon. Members, to endeavour to render the scheme as perfect as possible. Now it appears to me that if the County Council is to be an elective body, it should be altogether elective, and the duties with which it should be entrusted should comprehend the management of all local, as distinguished from national or Imperial, affairs. If there is to be Local Government, let it be Local Government. Instead of having one broad, simple, and popular electoral body, what is the net result of the proposals contained in these Bills — I mean, of course, in the three? These Bills relate to Local Government. There will be three electorates, three local bodies, and a considerable number of persons who will not be elected at all. The three electorates are—first, the Parliamentary electorate, plus women not labouring under certain disabilities, but minus the service vote. This electorate is only to be entrusted with the election of a body exercising

exceedingly minor functions. The next electorate is a somewhat singular one—consisting in part of the Commissioners of Supply, who are to be kept alive to choose seven of themselves, and in part of the County Council, which also will choose seven of its members, so as to constitute a Joint Committee. That strikes me as being a very complex and curious kind of body. Then there is a third electorate, under the Parochial Boards Bill, which is to consist half of owners and half of occupiers—which is a very anomalous sort of body. I submit that it would be far better to allow the first electorate to be the sole electorate, and do away with these complex proposals of the Government. As I have said, there is to be a fourth class of functionaries, who are not to be elected at all. If the system is to be elective, it does seem strange that it should be permitted under Clause 10 that the Convener or Chairman of the County Council may not only be elected from among the County Councillors, but may also be chosen from among all the persons qualified for the office of County Councillor. This, of course, requires that he shall be a county voter, and therefore one who shall have a certain connection with the county; but I ask why, when you are dealing with a system of election, should you not go through with it consistently, and leave this body and all the other bodies to choose their own Chairman for themselves? What would you think if in any burgh, say in the Royal burghs, the Councillors were allowed to elect their Provosts from outside the municipal bodies? The Chairman is the chief person in the elected body, and one who, of all others, should have stood the test of public approval if he is intended to be a deliberative and voting member. If he had been merely a sort of assessor I could have seen some reason for the proposal, but this is not to be his position under these Bills. Surely it is driving a great wedge into the principle of election to say that even the most popularly constituted body may go outside to choose its chief. The hon. Member for Kirkcudbright (Mr. M. Stewart) gave instances in which he thought it would be hard if persons not elected to the Council were not eligible for the office of Convener, and he pointed out that there might be someone who was too old to stand the work of a canvass, but whose experience might make it desirable that he should be chosen. If, however, a man is too old to stand the strain incidental to an election, he would also be too old for the work attaching to the office. I certainly think the Government would do well to strike out the last four or five words of the clause so as to leave the Convener to be chosen from the body of elected Councillors. The Convener of a county is at this moment chosen from the Commissioners of Supply, and it was never proposed that the Commissioners of Supply should go outside its own body. Reference has been made to the Parochial Boards Bill to show that in that case there is a larger latitude. The Chairman of the Parochial Board is to be elected "by the Parochial Board from among the Parish Councillors or other fit persons," which would seem to mean some one who need not have the qualification for election as a Parish Councillor. That is a very large proposal. I desire to say a few words as to what we on this side of the House regard as a grave defect in the definition of the electoral qualification—namely, that it excludes the holder of what is known as the service franchise. Now, this matter has assumed an entirely different position from that in which it would have stood prior to the Acts of 1884 and 1885. The service man has been admitted to the Parliamentary franchise, and in that capacity has the means of giving a mandate to persons whose duty it is to deal with matters of the utmost magnitude and importance. A great deal has been said about his not contributing to the rates; but that is merely the old argument that was adduced against every enlargement of the Parliamentary franchise. It was said, "If you divorce representation from property"—this argument being the foundation of the old property qualification—"you will allow men by their representatives to vote money which they do not contribute to provide." There have been many arguments of this sort urged, not only against the service franchise, but also against the lodger franchise. The lodger was the person upon whom this argument was last concentrated, and it was pointed out that if he neither

smoked tobacco nor drank Excisable liquors, he would not contribute either directly or indirectly towards the taxation of the country. Nevertheless, he was admitted to the franchise, no doubt upon the broad and clear principle that he was a citizen of the country, a man fulfilling all the duties of citizenship, one who was interested in the prosperity of the nation and who would share in that prosperity if it were rightly administered, or in its adversity if it were misgoverned. The view did not prevail that in dealing with a question of this kind you ought to strike a ledger balance between contribution to the taxes and the concession of the rights of citizenship. I do not say that this is absolutely identical with the case of local rating, but I ask is there any sufficient difference between the two cases to exclude the general principle to which I have referred? If so, what is it? *Primâ facie*, one would suppose that the considerations applicable to Imperial rates and to local rates are analogous, if not identical. It was alleged that if the working classes were allowed to be represented in Parliament they would be extravagant and would approve, or at least not object to a lavish expenditure of money to which they contribute only a very small share. But what has been the result? The contrary has proved the case. The experience we have had of the householders both in the towns and in the counties, as well as of the service men and the lodgers, proves that there has been no indication of anything like a tendency to extravagance on their part. We have seen that the more Members who are returned to this House as representatives of the working class constituencies, the more closely and vigilantly is attention directed to the Estimates, and the more strenuous are the efforts to enforce economy in the public expenditure. Why is it, then, that the service man is not to be allowed to vote in regard to matters concerning his own locality? Matters affecting sanitary condition of the locality, touching the health of himself and his family, and other similar matters are to be confided to the action of the County Council, and he has as direct an interets as anyone else in seeing that such affairs are rightly administered. I suppose the view of the Government must be that if you give him a vote, he will be careless as to the expenditure of the rates to which he does not contribute and will bring ruin on the locality by sheer extravagance. But I would put it to the House, is there any ground for this argument? Although he does not pay rates directly, he contributes to them indirectly; because if he paid rates directly he would receive more wages, and the landlord would make other and different arrangements with him; indeed, we find that in this very Bill such a case is pre-supposed, because it is provided that the service man shall be allowed to buy his vote by paying his proportion of the rates, and in that case there is to be a severance between the rate, in the first instance, laid on the property upon which he lives, as between the principal tenant and himself. The right hon. Gentleman who spoke last—the President of the Local Government Board—said this was a matter concerning owners; but I say that it is not a matter concerning owners; the owner's position is fixed whether the service man is let in or not, and the division of the rate provided for is not between the owner and the service man, but between the occupier and the service man. It is not because of the ownership, but because of the occupation that this portion of the rate is imposed, and this, for good and sufficient reasons. I submit, then, that the exclusion of the service man is utterly indefensible, unless some exceedingly strong reason is put forward in its favour. Now that the service man has got the Parliamentary franchise, there will undoubtedly be a very sore feeling excited in his mind if he has not the analogous right conferred upon him of helping to choose the Council who are to have the management of his own local affairs. It appears to me that another grave objection to this proposal, is that it puts upon the person on whom the right is to be conferred the obligation of having virtually to pay for it. The aim of every recent electoral reform and every amendment of the system of registration has been to make the system work automatically, and with much care directed to this end it has now been made to work very well indeed. My hon. Friends from Scotland know that we have

an admirable basis for making up the register, and that is the valuation roll, which contains, practically, all the information required for that purpose. When in 1884-85 we were framing the Bills extending the franchise to counties, and making the consequential alterations upon the registration laws, we provided that though there should be a Schedule having an entry of the houses occupied by service men, that they were not to be rated. Accordingly, the assessor in making up his list gets all the information he needed from the valuation roll. That will not be the case under this new system. From the point of view of the Government it must be provided that the money value of his house shall be placed against the name of the service man, which was not provided in the last Act.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): Yes.

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR: The assessor, however, in making up his list for County Councillors, has no valuation roll to work upon as regards service men. The service man has to claim, and the collector has to be provided with a number of forms of which, on application, he is to give one to the service man. So that instead of having an automatic system, no service man will be put upon the County Council Register who has not claimed. To give the service man a vote under such conditions is very much the same thing as not to give it to him at all; because very few would be sufficiently interested in the very limited powers conferred upon the County Councils to take the trouble of claiming. I altogether object to the principle of saying, "If you care to do certain things and make certain demands, you shall have a vote." Again, a possible danger from these conditions is, that they might be used towards the creation or non-creation of votes. A great employer of labour might—at all events, I do not see anything to prevent him—pay a wage intended to cover the rate, and you might in that case have the creation of a large number of votes; whereas another person might not wish that his servants should have votes, and might offer no facilities, in the matter of wages or otherwise, or might even put obstacles in the way of their obtaining them. It is a great pity that this exception of service men should be made, and I hope, on re-consideration, the Government will see their way to strike it out, and thus at once enlarge and simplify the electoral body. I would like to know, further, how the domestic relations of the ladies are to be found out, because it does not appear from the valuation roll whether a married woman is living apart from her husband or not. But I have no doubt some provision will be made for that. I further desire to point out that under these Bills we shall have a very complex system of registration. There will be four registers for every locality—the Parliamentary register, the County Council register, the School Board register, and the Parish Council register. I do not know whether there will be a Commissioners of Supply register; but at all events, there will be four registers. As far as possible we should in this matter aim at simplicity, because simplicity means inexpensiveness, and if you multiply machinery you must multiply costs. That is what I have to say with regard to the larger County Council, and I hope the Government may see their way to obviate some of the objections stated. The next body is the Joint Standing Committee, and I certainly feel a very strong objection to the proposals with respect to it. The Commissioners of Supply stand upon the property qualification, and there has not hitherto been that remarkably nice weighing-out of power in proportion to taxation which is proposed by this Bill, because the Commissioners of Supply are all the owners of property in the county, but only those of over £100 annual value, and the eldest sons of owners, of £400, who have not yet come into possession, and, of course, pay no rates. All the proprietors under £100 would, under the system to be brought into operation by this Bill, as hitherto have no voice in the administration of the rates, while the eldest sons who have no property would continue to have a voice in that matter. What are the duties for which the Commissioners of Supply are thus proposed to be kept alive? To elect seven of their number to constitute, along with the seven elected by the County Councillors, the Trust Committee proposed to be created by the Bills. And what are the powers proposed to be confided to this somewhat anomalously constituted body? They are,

first, to deal with capital expenditure, and, secondly, with the police. Now, this principle of confining the power to dealing with capital expenditure to limited class, different from the general administrative body, is, so far as I know, unprecedented, except in the case of the Roads and Bridges Act. Therefore, it has neither the merit of antiquity nor of custom. The section of the Roads and Bridges Act to which I refer slipped through in 1878, and there may have been some considerations which justified it. There had been in times past enormous debts contracted by the land proprietors for the formation of roads. These debts were very burdensome, and I can quite understand that a special case might be made out in regard to the power of assessing the proprietors for their payment. But what I want to point out is this, that in so far as capital expenditure was provided for by the Roads and Bridges Act, it was to pay debts—that was the past capital expenditure; and it simply made the proper debtor pay his own debt. If you had introduced anybody else, you would have made one person pay the debt another person had already contracted. Accordingly, in that case, Parliament may have said—"We will deal with the matter of capital expenditure, past and future, in a broad way; we shall not divide the liability, and we will give the administration exclusively to the persons liable." But by the proposals of the Bills with respect to this Joint Committee, you really withdraw from the elective County Council that which is most valuable and most important. Such things as roads and bridges, water supply, and other matters most vitally affecting the health and life of the community are not to be confided to the County Council. The proposal practically is to give this Joint Committee power to stop the improvement of the country. If you disallow capital expenditure, except with their sanction and at their instance, it seems to me it would be quite possible to retard the development of the country and to prevent the sanitary arrangements, which are now so necessary, from being made. I wish to say a word about the capital expenditure in burghs. In the burghs you have got a popularly-elected body which deals with all such questions. The great peculiarity of this proposal is that the truly elective Council is only to be allowed to maintain but not to extend or improve. There will not be one body which can take a general view of the question. That, I say, is a most serious defect. It is a defect which does not exist in the burgh administration. I am quite alive to the view upon which the proposal was founded—namely, that much of the capital expenditure in the counties is made by the proprietors, whereas, in the towns it is made chiefly by the occupiers. In burghs, I believe, about one-sixth of the rates are divided between the owner and the occupier, and five-sixths fall upon the occupier alone. But I never heard that because the owner and occupier divided some of the rates there ought to be separate administrative bodies with powers proportioned to the precise contribution of each. Then, again, there are some of the Commissioners of Supply who do not want to be kept alive. That is so in one of the counties which I have the honour to represent. I do not wonder that such a feeling should exist in the minds of the Commissioners of Supply seeing that it is a very poor duty, which they are to be kept alive to discharge, and they think that it is better to abolish them if you give them nothing better to do. In regard to the administration of the county rate, I will say a word as to what is called the stereotyping proposal. Undoubtedly, it is an important and difficult question how that rate should be dealt with. The proposal, I understand, is to fix as a guide for future payments the amount which has been paid on the average during the last five years. Some of my hon. Friends have suggested that it would be better not to stereotype anything, but to allow existing leases to run out, and then divide the charge between the owner and the occupier. I cannot say that, but it is clear to my mind that this would be just. Hitherto the county rate has generally been discharged upon the land, and a large part of it is the lineal descendant of what used to be called "rogue money." If a tax of this sort is stereotyped, whether the value of land goes up or down, the impost remains the same. If the land rises in value the generic contribution would not go up, and if the value of land goes down it will be the same; it would still be stereotyped at the same figure. The land tax

which in olden times bore a material proportion to the value of the land, does not do so now, and the transference of a burden which has always formed a charge upon the ownership of land, from land to labour, would be open to objection. The question is, what proportion of the aggregate of local rates does the land pay now? Is it so large in proportion to other contributions that it might not well be thrown into the mass of a consolidated rate? If it were large, I could understand the proposal; but compared with the rates generally, it is very small. I have not been able to obtain the amount of the contribution last year. No local taxation Returns are as yet issued for a later date than 1886-87, and in that year the county rate levied by the Commissioners of Supply throughout Scotland amoun ted to £163,717. A very valuable Return was issued this morning which gives the rate per pound of each local charge in Scotland, but it does not specify the total amount of each. From another Return, however, it appears that the total amount of the rates levied with the poor rate down to August last year in the Scotch parishes and counties was £853,173, and in the burghs £521,411, making altogether £1,374,584. That example shows how enormous the rates generally are as compared with this particular contribution, and I submit for the consideration of the Government and of the House whether it is worth while to have the complexity of stereotyping for separate administration so relatively small an impost. Would it not be better to let it go into the consolidated rate? Then, in regard to the control of the police force, I say that unless some strong reason can be assigned there ought not to be a less power given to counties than is now, and have long been, possessed by burghs. The inhabitants of a rural district are as much interested in the protection of life and property within that district as are residents in a burgh. From time immemorial the burgesses themselves performed the police duty, "watch and ward," and when provision was made for the establishment of a regular police force, that force was placed under the charge of the elected members of the municipality. I entirely agree in what has been said of the Commissioners of Supply that they have acted conscientiously and well as far as the matters with which they have had to deal are concerned, and the proposal now made does not arise from any dissatisfaction with them, but from a feeling that there is room for a much larger and wider administration, and that the field they covered was a very small one. As to the management of their police by the burghs, we have had a large experience. The County of Lanark has 262 police, besides ten extra men, making 272; but the City of Glasgow has 966, with 111 extra men, making a total of 1,077 police administered by a great democratic city, as against 272 administered by the county. Having that experience, what is there to lead to the conclusion that the County of Lanark could not by a popularly-elected Council administer its 272 police as well as the City of Glasgow does by its popularly-elected Council administer its force of 1,077 police? This is a very important matter, and I hardly think, after the speeches which have been made upon the question, that the Government will refuse to allow the County Councils to have the control of the police. Reference was made yesterday to some northern counties in which a spirit of lawlessness, which everyone must lament, had manifested itself. This is a subject which I admit deserves the most serious consideration. No one had graver or more constant anxiety than I had for some years when in office in regard to the condition of the localities referred to, and in any opinion I venture to express I fully recognize the character of the difficulty that may be supposed to exist there. But there are some points which I would ask the House to bear in mind in considering this matter. Unhappy as the disturbances among the crofters were, they did not occur among a population which can be described as criminal. No part of Scotland is more free from what may be called ordinary crime. It may, therefore, not be too much to express a hope that the causes which led to these disturbances were temporary in their nature; and it certainly would not be fair, on the experience of a short period of trouble in certain Highland counties, to found legislation which should be applicable to the whole of Scotland. I quite admit that this is a question

on which the special information in the possession of the Government places them in a better position to form an opinion than hon. Members who do not possess such information, but I may remind the House that the disturbances in question did not prevail over the whole of the counties in which they occurred, and I cannot say that anything came to my knowledge which would lead me to suppose that any Committee elected from a county, as a whole, would be adverse to the maintenance of the law, or desire that there should be any part of the county in which the Queen's writ would not run. But there is another consideration which I feel ought also to have great weight. If responsibility is thrown on a locality, the locality will respond to it; and I think, unless the Government possess some information leading them to suppose that there is a permanent spirit of insubordination and disregard for the law pervading the counties referred to so largely that the County Council, as a whole, would decline to enforce the law, they would do well to re-consider their decision on this point and endeavour to remove a grave inconvenience. It should also be borne in mind that there are various checks in the hands of the Government which would enable them to defeat any action on the part of County Councils in the direction of declining to provide such a police force as might be requisite for maintaining law and order. If, for instance, the Central Government found that insufficient provision has been made for these essential objects, they would have power to stop the Imperial contribution to the pay and clothing of the force. But if the Government, in the exercise of its responsibility, think that these considerations are inadequate, and that there are circumstances so exceptional in a particular locality as to induce them to believe that it would be unsafe to give the charge of the police to that locality, such an exceptional condition should be met by an exceptional remedy, but it would not constitute a good reason for placing the whole of the counties of Scotland under the like disability as regards the administration of their own police. As my right hon. Friend the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) has pointed out, if the people of Scotland are satisfied that the County Councils may be entrusted with the management of the police, that management and control ought to be placed in their hands. I therefore hope that the Government may reconsider the matter of police in order to see whether they cannot grant to the counties powers which have been exercised so long and with so much success by the towns. It would stimulate a proper amount of interest among the electors in the action of the Council, and would induce many persons possessing the requisite qualifications to come forward and stand as candidates. The duties which by this Bill are not confided to the County Councils are, in the first place, education; secondly, lunacy; thirdly, the administration of the Poor Law; and lastly, the control of the capital expenditure. I do not think it can be disputed that the duties not confided to the popularly-elected body form by far the largest and most interesting portion of Local Government. A number of duties are enumerated in the Bill, but it appears to me that there is not so much substance in them as one would like to see; they are not of such a character as either to stimulate interest in the electors or induce them to come forward. The non-elective part of the Council has by far the largest portion of the duties connected with local administration. The bulk is saved to the non-elected, and but very little is given to the popularly-chosen body. The administration of the Contagious Diseases Act, although it is of importance in certain localities, is not a very stimulating and interesting duty for a popularly-elected body to discharge. Then, again, the Public Health Act would have been important if it had not been for the provision in regard to capital expenditure, which will make it impossible for the popular body to enter into any schemes for drainage, water supply, and road extension. The exceptions practically reduce the Council to the position of having to maintain things which other people are to provide. The only things really left to them uncontrolled are gas meters, explosive substances, weights and measures, habitual drunkards, wild fowls, and the registration of the rules of scientific societies—a somewhat hetero-

genous mixture. While the general intention with which the Bill started was exceedingly good, it would have been better had the intention been kept up, and if the Government had seen their way, or can now see their way, to strike out the exceptions to which I have referred. I trust that on further consideration the Government will consent to extend a more generous confidence to the county population of Scotland. I had desired to say something on other matters, but I have taken up so much of the time of the House that I will refrain from doing so. I will only add, in conclusion, that I have pointed out what I conceive to be the defects of the Bill, not in any spirit of hostility, quite the reverse, but with a desire to see it extended to a sphere of greater and wider usefulness. It has been said that the powers of Councils might be afterwards enlarged; but it would be much better that the legislation in this important subject should not be merely provisional, but that from the first these popularly-elected bodies should have such powers as to make them strong, respected, and useful.

*MR. CRAIG SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick): The hon. Gentleman the Member for Caithness stated yesterday that, in his opinion, this is not a Second Reading debate, and I think that if he had been here to-day he would have admitted that the long speeches we have had have dealt with matters of detail rather than principle. Still, I think the House is greatly indebted to the hon. Member for Aberdeen for his speech and for the manner in which he has martialed his statistics. His speech, however, did not touch on the principle of the Bill; it was aimed at a single Sub-section of a single clause in one of the two Bills. Still, the speech will prove of value to us when we get into Committee on the Bill. Now, with regard to the principle of the Bill, I think we are practically agreed. There is no great divergence on either side of the House. Where we do differ is chiefly on matters of detail, and I therefore hope, when the Bill gets into Committee, the House will gain from the elaborate discussion on the Second Reading by the shortening of the debates in Committee and the consequent diminution of the labours of hon Members. In considering the Bill, I put to myself this question: I said, if it is to be satisfactory to the people of Scotland it should fulfil three requisites: first, it should be as popular or as democratic as the English Bill; secondly, that taxation and representation should go together throughout the Bill; and thirdly, that the machinery of the Bill should be of such an elastic character that if it does not now embrace various methods which are called Local Government in Scotland, it may in time be expanded so as to include them. Now, in my opinion, the Bill does sufficiently fulfil these conditions; but, in one or two particulars, not quite so fully as I should like. First, is the Bill as popular as the English one? We have heard a great deal from my right hon. Friend below me (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), and from the Chief Secretary, to the effect that there should be no reference to the English Bill in this debate; that the latter Bill is an unclean thing which we in Scotland ought not to touch. I cannot agree with that. In origin and intention both the English and the Scotch Bills are identical. The origin of the English Bill was a desire to have a more democratic form of government in the counties. It was held that as the householders were the men who now returned Members to Parliament, as the householders in towns elected men to manage their Municipal affairs, so in counties the householders should have equal power in the management of their local business. Well, a precisely similar demand in Scotland has produced the Scotch Bills. Again, as to the intention of the two Bills being alike. The English Bill was intended to transfer the management of county business from an *ex officio* body to an elective and representative body. The same is the case in the Scotch Bill; precisely the same thing is proposed to be done—except in this, that, whereas in England there are Councillors selected by the Council, in Scotland there are no selected Councillors. But, Sir, in saying that, and in giving my entire agreement to the exclusion of selected Councillors, I am bound to say, that so far as I understand the matter, selected Councillors have answered well in England; they have given a certain stability to the County Councils which otherwise they might not have had, because men of experience have been

chosen as the selected Councillors. Now, in a county in which I spend a good deal of my time, it happened that two Gentlemen equally experienced in county matters, men of the same Party and same complexion in politics, and both desirable candidates, stood for one division and ran a tie. The Returning Officer gave his vote in favour of one, and the first thing the County Council did was to elect the other one as an Alderman. The power of selection in that case was usefully exercised; still, notwithstanding that, I cannot regret its exclusion from the Scotch Bill. My right hon. Friend, the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks), took exception to the fact, that four nominated or *ex officio* members are to be elected for the first County Council. My opinion is, that if we do not have selected Councillors, and if there is no way of having men of experience to manage county affairs, it is desirable to have at the start the four *ex officio* members whom the Government proposed. I should like to ask the Lord Advocate what is to be the numbers of the County Councillors in each county. I am aware that according to the Bill the Scotch Secretary is to decide the number, but I think it would be a matter of interest to the House and the people of Scotland to get some idea as to what the number in each county is to be. In my opinion it should be a large Council, because a large Council would represent a large body of public opinion, and there are many functions, independent of the administrations of the counties, which this large Council might discharge. When Scotch Bills are introduced into this House, it would be very desirable that they should be sent down to the large County Councils, who would be able to express a valuable opinion upon them. So much for the first requisite. The second requisite is that the principle of taxation and representation going together should be maintained in this Bill. I am surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling Burghs say that no doubt that principle had done good service in the past, but apparently he considered it is obsolete in the present time. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire accepted the principle which he said has been won from the other side, but he added that, in preference to such a principle, he went now for manhood and womanhood suffrage out and out.

MR. MARJORIBANKS: What I intended to say was that I considered that the suffrage on the part of man and woman at this moment rested upon the fact that the man and woman are citizens of this great Empire, and as such have a right to a voice in the management of its affairs.

*MR. CRAIG SELLAR: That is exactly what I said. It may be or may not be a sound view, but it does not appear to me that, even upon this great principle of humanity, we should throw over the principle of taxation and representation going together—which undoubtedly is a good and sound principle. I consider that this principle is violated in the proposal which stereotypes the contribution hitherto paid by the Commissioners of Supply. The objects of that contribution, the average of which for five years is to be stereotyped, are to meet the daily and continuous expenses of the county and to form a Sinking Fund to pay off the debt which has been incurred by the Commissioners of Supply. It may be right enough to stereotype contribution for the first of these objects, but it cannot be right to stereotype the second. In the County of Lanark the contributions to be stereotyped amounted to something like £27,000 a year, of which £17,000 is contributed for the daily and continuous expenses connected with the county, and £10,000 towards the Sinking Fund, in order to pay off a debt which is rapidly diminishing, and in a few years may disappear altogether. Assuming that the debt does disappear altogether, it surely is not fair that it should be stereotyped and continued for ever. There is another matter which requires consideration. In certain of the northern counties within the last five years, there have been incurred expenses of an exceptional character, and it is scarcely fair that these exceptional years should be taken in calculating the average to be stereotyped. Ten years, or some other period, should rather be adopted. As a matter of fact, however, it would be better to get rid of this stereotyped contribution altogether. Another violation of the principle of taxation and representation going together is the treatment of the

service franchise holders. I regard as sound the contention that the rates are practically paid by the service franchise holders, and that if the ploughman did not receive £40 and a free house, he would receive £45 or £50 as wages. I believe that, as a rule, the owner would pay the rate for the service franchise holder. If that rate were ten shillings—half paid by owner, half by occupier—the owner would increase the wages of the serviceman by five shillings to meet his portion of the rate. If that were so, is it really worth while to go through all this elaborate process to take 5*s*. out of one pocket to put it into another? I consider the service franchise holders as the cream of the electorate in many counties, and I should be exceedingly sorry that they should be prevented from exercising the franchise in the election of County Councillors. So much for the second requisite. Now as to the third. In my opinion, the scheme of the Government is sufficiently elastic to enable further functions, in course of time, to be entrusted to the new bodies. And now, Sir, I come to the question of the duties to be performed by the new County Councils. I have heard no reasons yet why the work now done by the School Boards, the Parochial Boards, the management of the roads and bridges, and all sanitary matter, should not be undertaken by one County Council. I am glad to think the Lord Advocate contemplates extending the powers of the Council. Of course, these bodies must creep before they can walk, and walk before they can run, and it might be a dangerous thing to put too many duties on them at once. These new duties will come in time, and the scheme will expand to meet them. Now, I consider it most important that the principle of free education has been conceded. I know that this proposal has in a sense been sprung upon us, but I think that, in spite of some defects, the scheme is as good as any likely to be proposed. The difficulty is that we have only £171,000 to deal with. I should have liked if we had had money enough to make a clean sweep and have free education entirely, and I hope if there are any other sources from which money can be got for the purpose that a clean sweep will be made. I wish to consider the matter now in reference to the £171,000. How is that to be disposed of? The money is to be paid to the Education Department, which will hand it over to the School Boards or school managers, who are to provide free education for children attending certain schools. £155,000 is to be expended in this way, and as the cost per week per child is 2d., the number of children provided for is about 446,000. If that be so, a difficulty arises. The bulk of the fees at present are over 2d. The latest return shows that 23 per cent of the children pay 2d. and below 3d., 26 per cent pay 3d. and less than 4d., and 25 per cent pay 4d. and less than 6d. That is a difficulty to which I think the Government should give its attention. A great deal has been said about pauperizing children by compelling them to apply to the Parochial Board, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) has told us that the Parochial Board is to be altogether eliminated. Are we to understand that the School Board is now to take the place of the Parochial Board, and is the School Board to make inquiries with regard to the ability or inability of the parents to pay fees, because, if so, the School Board must simply go to the Parochial Board, for there is no other means of getting the information? That is a difficulty, and I do not see how it is to be met. In arranging that children shall have free education up to the Third Standard and have their fees paid in the higher standards if their parents are unable to pay the fees, we are in a sense reverting to the old parochial system; for under that system it is well known that while some children paid their fees, others—children of "pregnant points," to use the words of the old Scotch Statute—got their education free. That system worked well in the past. I do not see why it should not work equally well in the future. Hitherto the Parochial Boards have paid £20,000 a year in fees. Will that grant continue? I assume it will not, and if it does not the £20,000 is gained. Again, under the Endowed Schools Act from £10,000 to £15,000 has been given in relief of fees. Will that continue? I assume it will not. Then there is the nest egg of upwards of £190,000 which was mentioned by the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter). We should like to know

how all this money is to be disposed of; it might with advantage be spent in re-establishing and improving the system of higher education in Scotland. That system has never had fair play in Scotland. It has been starved. I should be glad if some of the money saved under this scheme could be given to the higher education. But the freeing of the lower standards is, perhaps, the first necessity. I assume that the object of the Government is, in the main, to diminish the pressure which is felt by the compulsory clauses. I have always hoped free education would come out of the taxation, but in this instance it is to come out of money which is a kind of windfall. I am not inclined to look a gift-horse in the mouth, and therefore I gladly accept the £171,000 in the hope that the financial genius of the Government will be able to devise a satisfactory scheme for its application. It is unnecessary for me to say much upon the question of denominational schools. It seems to me we must make up our minds, whatever our previous conviction, that all schools must be embraced in the scheme, that denominational schools, as well as public and Board Schools, must receive advantages equally. There is just one other point I desire to refer to. This Local Government scheme as introduced consists of four Bills. My right hon. Friend the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) stated yesterday that in his opinion the Private Bill Procedure Bill would not be passed this Session. I hope it is not the Government's intention to drop that Bill because of all the matters connected with the Local Government scheme. I believe that measure is as popular, if not more popular, than any of the others.

MR. W. SINCLAIR (Falkirk Burghs): I desire to say a very few words upon this Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Clackmannan (Mr. J. B. Balfour) occupies a high position, but that position carries with it corresponding obligations, and I believe I only express the view of hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House when I say we should like from hon. Members who occupy high positions a greater amount of condensation and a greater amount of arrangement in their speeches than was displayed by the hon. and learned Gentleman. If we got that, a good deal more time would be allowed to non-official Members to speak upon subjects which interest not only themselves, but their constituents. Now, I am glad to find that the debate so far has not been characterized by any Party recrimination. There has been evinced on both sides of the House a desire to recognize that this subject has been approached by the Government with a wish to settle this question as far as they can in accordance with Liberal principles, in accordance with the views of the Scotch people. I must express regret that the creation of Local Government, which is the birthright of the Liberal Party, has not fallen to their share; but in doing so I heartily congratulate the Conservative Government in having had the courage of the convictions they have more recently formed. I believe the object of the Bill is to lay stable foundations upon which Local Government can be well and properly carried on for the advantage of the Scottish people. I do not intend to travel over all the subjects touched upon in the course of the discussion, but only to refer to the question of the application of the Probate Duty grant for the purposes of education. The problem to be solved is how best to devote the £171,000, the amount available, to the relief of fees, and at the same time give the greatest relief to the ratepayers. My belief is that the Government have commenced at the wrong end in proposing a remission of fees in the lower standards rather than in the higher standards. We must take it for granted that there is a great inclination on the part of parents to take their children away from school at an early age, in order that they may reap some advantage from the wages the children may earn. That tendency is one that has been fought against by the Scottish people, and I think we ought to endeavour to encourage by legislative enactments the retention of children at school until they have passed all the standards. We must remember that it is part of the parent's responsibility to provide education for his child up to a certain standard just as much as it is part of the parent's responsibility to provide maintenance and clothing for his child up to

a given age. If relief is to be given to the ratepayer who has children at school, it stands to reason that the school fees are heaviest while a child is attending the higher standards. The object of the Government, therefore, in relieving the ratepayer will be better effected by remitting the fees in the higher standards rather than in the lower. I sincerely hope the Government will find a means of abolishing all school fees, but failing that, I trust they will remit the fees in the higher instead of in the lower standards.

SIR H. MAXWELL: I beg to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Debate further adjourned till Monday next.

POLITICAL OFFICES PENSION ACT (1869) REPEAL BILL. (No. 77.)

Order for Second Reading, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I think that before this Bill is read a second time we ought to have some explanation of its provisions.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: The Bill only contains one clause. It proposes to repeal an Act under which certain pensions of a political character have been granted. The matter was discussed in 1888 in the debate on perpetual pensions, and I do not think the House at this hour can wish to be troubled with any remarks upon it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER): I certainly do not think it is desirable that this Bill should be read a second time without the policy of the measure being discussed. The hon. Member has suggested that it is covered by the discussion which took place the other night.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: No; last year.

SIR R. WEBSTER: I understood the hon. Gentleman to say just now that it was covered by the debate which took place the other night; but he now says it was covered by a discussion which took place last year. That strengthens the observation I made, that it seems that this Bill ought certainly not to pass without full discussion. The Bill proposes to repeal the Act of 1869, and to prevent any further pensions being granted.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: There is a Saving Clause as to existing pensions.

SIR R. WEBSTER: It seems to me we must consider this matter with reference to the circumstances under which pensions are granted. It is quite impossible by a mere vote of the House now, even assuming the hon. Gentleman to be successful in obtaining the Second Reading, to decide the principle involved. I do not even know that the hon. Gentleman explained the matter at great length last year, but I am quite certain of this, that if he did explain it he did not succeed in getting the assent of anything like a majority of the House to the views he expressed.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: The Resolution of the House was unanimous.

SIR R. WEBSTER: It was not unanimous that we should repeal the Political Offices Pension Act (1869). I certainly would suggest that the debate be adjourned.

It being ten minutes to seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Friday next, at two of the clock.

CORPORATE ASSOCIATIONS (PROPERTY) BILL. (No. 209.)

Order for Second Reading, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Howell.*)

SIR R. WEBSTER: The Bill has a most seductive title, but I cannot help regarding it rather as a wolf in sheep's clothing. It will alter the whole law in respect to corporate property.

MR. HOWELL: It is practically based on the Report of the Royal Commission.

It being Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next at Two of the clock.

Attention called to the number of Members present. House counted and 40 Members found in their places.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.

Order for Committee, read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PENAL SYSTEM AND CONVICT DISCIPLINE.

*Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I rise to move—

"That the inequality and the irregularity of the sentences pronounced by our Criminal Courts require the immediate and serious attention of the Government, and that an humble address be presented to Her Majesty praying for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire as to the best means by which greater equality of sentences, and the more systematic punishment of repeated offences may be secured."

My original intention was to make my Resolution wider in its terms, so as to embrace the character of the punishment as well as the period of its detention, but upon reconsideration, and consultation with others, I have decided to restrict my Resolution within its present limits for two reasons. In the first place, the most pressing scandal in the administration of our Criminal Law at present is undoubtedly the inequality of sentences; and in the second place, so far as I am aware, no public inquiry has ever been directed to this particular topic, whilst on the other hand we have the Reports of many Royal Commissions on the treatment of felons in prison. But I have also another reason. The learned Solicitor General (Sir E. Clarke) recently in debate used very remarkable language. He said—

"There is a great deal of crime among us, and as one remedy I look in the direction of making our sentences more equal. Let us have more certainty of detection, with known and equal punishments."

"Known and equal punishments"—that is the text supplied by the hon. and learned Gentleman, to which I desire to call the attention of the House. In the first place, there is probably no system in the world—I doubt whether there has ever been at any period of the world's history—a criminal system which has left so wide a discretion as our own to Judges in the apportionment of punishment. Probably my hon. and learned Friends will tell me that it is necessarily so, and in the present condition of the law I agree with them. But why? Simply because our definitions of crime are so wide that in one particular definition you embrace offences that are in nature and quality essentially different. I will give the House a single illustration. Suppose a band of marauders armed to the teeth in the dead of night break into a lonely dwelling-house, closely bolted and barred, and carry off thousands of pounds worth of property. Well, that is burglary. Then, on the other hand, suppose this case:—At five minutes past nine on a summer evening a poor, hunger-driven woman lifts the sash of a baker's window and takes a penny worth of bread for her starving child. Well, that is burglary also. Yet in the one case the gravity of the offence would scarcely be adequately punished by penal servitude for life, whilst in the other case many of us think that a day's imprisonment would be too severe a penalty. I might give similar illustrations under any grave head of crime, rape, bigamy, perjury, and perhaps the most conspicuous illustrations of all would be under the head of manslaughter, but I need not occupy time with such illustrations. One of the suggestions I would submit to the consideration of a Royal Commission is this, whether it is not desirable, and if desirable, whether it is not practicable, so to recast our definitions of crime that one particular definition shall not embrace offences which in nature and quality are absolutely different. If that could be done then you would restrict the discretion of the Judges and would secure one desideratum to which the Solicitor General referred—namely, that the punishment would be know within narrower limits than at present. But, for argument's sake, I will suppose that it is impracticable to restrict by legislation the discretion of Judges, or, at all events, impracticable to restrict it in any material degree, then I say there is the more imperative necessity that we should erect in this country a Court of Criminal Appeal. Several cases lately brought before the House have shown how necessary it is we should have a court to which appeals against convictions may be possible, but it

more concerns my present purpose to point out that where the Commission of the offence is not itself in question, it is still imperatively important there should be under proper conditions the right of appeal for the revision of sentences. I desire to speak with all respect of Her Majesty's Judges, at the same time I feel bound to say that no sensible, no candid mind can doubt that if the sentences of learned Judges were liable—I will only put it so high as that—were liable to be canvassed and criticized by a superior Court in the same way as the judgment of a Judge almost at every point of a civil action is liable to be canvassed and criticized by a superior Court, then I cannot doubt that sentences would be pronounced with a very different sense of responsibility, and that sentences would, in many cases, be very different from those which too often startle and disgust the public conscience. I desire to quote two cases which I have selected because I am extremely anxious the attention of the country should be called to them. I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman (the Home Secretary) gives me his attention, and I hope Her Majesty's clemency may be extended to these cases, because, of course, under the present law, that is the only resource in these and similar cases. At the Liverpool Summer Assizes last year, four lads, aged about 17, were found guilty of robbery from a poor woman of the sum of 3s., the robbery being accompanied by personal violence. It was a most dastardly offence and richly deserved a severe punishment. But what was the punishment actually inflicted? Penal servitude for 14 years, on lads of 17! I am not surprised that the Report of the proceedings says the severity of the sentence caused great surprise. With the permission of the House I will quote a few words from the language used by the learned Judge in pronouncing sentence. He said:—

"It is truly intolerable that a set of rascals like you, just between boyhood and manhood, should be allowed to become the terror of all decent people."

Does not this language on the face of it supply evidence of the impulsive impressionable character of the sentence pronounced in hot blood—a sentence which, if it could happily come up for revision before a full court of Judges, would not be allowed to stand? There is another case, a still more notorious case, to which I will call the right hon. Gentleman's attention. It is a case in respect to which an evening newspaper, with which I seldom agree, performed a great public service by continually bringing it before the public notice. I mean the well-known case of the boy Osborne, 17 years old, convicted at the Central Criminal Court, of an attempt to blackmail a gentleman by threatening to accuse him of an odious crime. Of course the crime committed by Osborne was a crime of the most serious character, a crime which requires to be treated with heavy punishment. But what was the sentence pronounced by the learned Judge on this lad of 17? No less a sentence than penal servitude for life! A few months afterwards, at the same Court, but before another Judge, a man was convicted of a similar crime, a crime which the Judge who pronounced sentence said was one of the worst possible description of its class, and he concluded by passing a sentence of ten years' penal servitude. Since that time, at the same Court, again and again, men have been convicted of the same crime certainly not under more aggravated circumstances, and in no case has a heavier sentence than 10 years' penal servitude been pronounced. I know the attention of the Home Secretary has been called to the case and I do hope that he will take it into his very serious consideration, because I can assure him of this, that there is a very considerable section of the community who regard the sentence as vindictive, and of extremely unjustfiable severity. I spoke just now of a sentence being pronounced in hot blood and perhaps I may be permitted to remind the House that some years ago the writer of a leading article in the *Times* made a suggestion that is worthy of consideration. It was suggested that, where the crime was of a very serious character, which must from any point of view necessitate a severe sentence, the sentence should not be pronounced by a single Judge and on the spot, but should be deferred, and should be pronounced after consideration by the learned Judge who had tried the case and two or three other Judges, to whom the former would have to explain and justify the

sentence that he proposed to pass. As a somewhat analogous illustration I may mention that some 25 or 30 years ago three Judges used to sit together at the trials of the Central Criminal Court, and I have heard Mr. Poland say that the plan had an excellent effect. All the Judges in turn passed through a sort of school at the Central Criminal Court with this result, that the Central Criminal Court set up a kind of standard for criminal sentences, and the Judges when they went on circuit adhered very much to that standard. That system as the House knows probably, exists no longer; we have now only one Judge at the Central Criminal Court, and he sits on an average only for two or three days, and we have therefore lost that valuable standard which according to the opinion of one of the most eminent criminal lawyers of the day once existed. I desire to avoid if possible every remark of an invidious or provocative character, and do not therefore propose to dwell at length on the sentences which are pronounced at Quarter Sessions, but I think I may at all events say this, that some of the most unjustifiable sentences passed are pronounced in those Courts, although I do not wish to point out cases. I may take the fact as sufficiently established. There is, however, one class of punishments in our Criminal Code as to which the superior Judges and the Courts of Quarter Sessions seem to be at cross purposes. I refer to the addition to sentences of penal servitude of what is called police supervision. Judges have exhibited a great objection to this police supervision, while Quarter Sessions order this addition to sentences in the most lavish spirit. It is a subject on which there may fairly be considerable difference of opinion, but I think all will agree with me that in similar cases it ought to be equally applied by all our criminal courts. But what are the facts? I find that out of 720 cases in which sentence of penal servitude was pronounced, 240 sentences were passed by Judges, and of these in only nine cases did the Judges order the imprisonment to be followed by police supervision, but of the remaining 480 sentences passed by Quarter Sessions no fewer than 209 were to be followed by police supervision. In other words, while the Judges ordered this addition to less than 4 per cent of their sentences, the Sessions adopted it in 43 per cent of theirs. I think that is a subject to which the attention of the Commission might properly be directed. If the Judges will not order police supervision then I think it would only be reasonable that Quarter Sessions should be precluded from passing such sentences. As I have referred to the Magistrates I may be permitted to point out the gross inequality in respect to sentences pronounced upon children by courts of summary jurisdiction. Now, we had thought — at least, I had thought — that imprisonment of very young children had practically ceased, and I must say I was astonished by the revelations of Mr. John Hutton, a Yorkshire Magistrate, last year, who showed that 40 children under 16 years of age had in the previous 12 months been committed to Northallerton Gaol, and he mentioned also the fact more immediately pertinent to my present purpose, that 17 of these 40 children had been committed by one Magistrate. I find also from the last Return that upon the 31st March last there were seven children under 12 years of age in Her Majesty's prisons. Now what does this mean? I may here use a very short quotation:—

> "Those only who have seen, as I have seen, a little creature of 8 or 9 years of age crouching in a corner of a cell and crying for its mother, can fully realize what must be the amount of misery inflicted by such treatment."

Now that is not the language of a sentimentalist addressing a public meeting, it is taken from a semi-official communication addressed to the Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire by an experienced, and perhaps I may say without offence, a case-hardened Police Magistrate, Mr. Kinnersley, of Birmingham. I rejoice in the fact that a Bill has been introduced for the "Prevention of Cruelty to Children." I shall rejoice still more if it passes into law, but at the same time I would for a moment ask the House to consider whether there is not a very considerable degree of cruelty practised upon children in the way I have indicated under the sanction of the law by cruel or thoughtless Magistrates. One of the contrasts which most impress the public mind is the extreme severity with which crimes againt property are punished, as compared with the leniency, I might almost say the callous leniency, in some cases exhibited in

sentences for crimes against the person. It is not necessary that I should give the House more than one or two illustrations, because any newspaper which contains a report of criminal trials shows the contrast upon which I am now insisting. I will take, however, one or two cases. B, a weak-minded man who had once been sent to gaol for a minor offence—of course, it must have been a felony, was for stealing a shirt sentenced to five years' penal servitude, and five years' police supervision. Here is another:—C had been committed to gaol four times for petty offences, then for stealing a rabbit-gin he was sentenced to 7 years' penal servitude, and 2 years' police supervision, and again for stealing a garden fork to 10 years' penal servitude and 5 years' police supervision. And now here is a case to which I ask particular attention, that of a man convicted—a first offence—of embezzlement and sent into penal servitude. I have no right to complain of that, embezzlement is a most serious crime; I do not know the facts of the case, I assume that he was properly sentenced. He came out of prison and for 16 years he lived an honest man. Then he stole some candles, was convicted of that, the previous conviction was raked up against him, and he was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude, and seven years' police supervision. Now, I do pronounce that a scandalous thing—("Where?") I give the case as I find it in this book published by Mr. W. Tallack, the Secretary to the Howard Association, which I think will carry weight with my hon. and learned Friend. It does not say where this sentence was passed, but no doubt I shall be able to supply my hon. Friend with the information later. In the Roman Law they had cumulative sentences as we have, but if an interval of three years elapsed between the termination of one period of punishment and the commission of a second offence, then the first offence could not be raked up to aggravate the sentence for the second offence. There is a humane and proper spirit in such an enactment. Now I come to the last case with which under this head I need trouble the House. At the Autumn Assizes at York, in 1887, a distinguished Judge—there is no reason why I should not say it was the Lord Chief Justice—had before him a woman who had already undergone 10 years' imprisonment for stealing a door mat, and was then charged with the theft of a piece of linen. The Lord Chief Justice sentenced her to three weeks hard labour and made the following observation—

> "I do not know what is to become of punishment. If people are to be sent to 10 years' penal servitude for stealing a door mat, what is to be done with men for half killing their wives?"

The fact is we punish petty offences against property in cases of a second felony with such disproportionate severity that there is absolutely no margin of difference left for the punishment of crimes of personal violence, hence it is that we have corporal punishment so often advocated in such cases. As long as the law practically teaches that a man's person is far less sacred than his property, and that the smallest theft is to be regarded as more criminal than the grossest cruelty, so long shall we have as a result a big crop of crimes of violence and brutality. I have no doubt my hon. Friends opposite will be disposed to say, as many of them have said in the press and elsewhere, that the public find fault with sentences because they do not understand them. Let this be granted, and even so my case will be proved up to the hilt, for if the public conscience is revolted by punishments which are excessive in some cases and callously lenient in others, then I say great mischief is done and one of the chief ends of punishment is defeated, because you have not carried the opinion of the country with you. There is one case which I well remember. It occurred in 1881, in the Central Criminal Court, and excited great public attention and much unfavourable animadversion. It happened that on the same day—in the summer of 1881—a very distinguished Judge tried two men for the terrible crime in each case of kicking a woman to death. In one case the woman was the mistress of the man who committed the crime, and in the other she was the wife of the criminal. The sentences passed were—in one case six weeks' imprisonment, and in the other five years' penal servitude. By an unhappy fatality it happened that the sentence of five years' penal servitude was passed in the case in which the woman was the mistress,

whilst that of six weeks' imprisonment was awarded in the case in which the woman was only the wife. Well, Mr. Speaker, I will for argument's sake grant that it is conceivable that the offence of kicking a wife to death in a fit of drunken passion can be adequately punished by six weeks' imprisonment, although I think that that is a very large concession to make. But, at all events, I say that such a sentence ought not to have been passed upon the spur of the moment as the result of the impression made upon the mind of a single Judge, however eminent, but ought to have been passed after consideration by a Court at least as strong as the Court which tries Crown Cases Reserved. Probably my learned Friends will say with regard to my remarks about the severity with which crimes against property are punished that a person is not sent into penal servitude because he steals a shirt, or a garden fork, or a pennyworth of herrings, or three pennyworth of candles, but because he has repeatedly committed offences against society. Well, there is a good deal in that objection, and I quite admit that the case of habitual offenders is one of the most difficult problems which confronts us. There are two classes of habitual offenders who give the greatest possible trouble to conscientious Judges before whom they come. One class is guilty of repeated petty misdemeanours, the other of repeated petty felonies. The old law draws a wide, and in many cases very irrational distinction, between felonies and misdemeanours, and to one of the distinctions which still exist I desire to call the attention of the House. In the case of repeated felonies, of however trivial a character, the law allows the cumulation of sentences. For a second felony a heavier sentence can be passed than for a first, but the same principle of cumulation is not permitted by our law to be applied to misdemeanours. The result is that you have a considerable number of persons in this country upon whom scores of contemptible sentences of a few days or weeks have been passed. I saw reported a little while ago the case of a woman who had been convicted as many as 150 times, and readers of newspapers occasionally come across cases in which men and women have received these small sentences 50, 60 or 70 times. Now, it is perfectly evident that persons of that class are not afraid of prison, and, what is perhaps of still greater importance and significance is that the contempt which they feel for prison they spread through the society in which they move. As long ago as 1872 the Liverpool Magistrates made a move in this matter. They approached the Home Secretary and strongly urged that it was desirable that the cumulative principle of sentences should be applied to the punishment of all crimes, whether misdemeanours or felonies. I am disposed to think that great good would result from a change in the law of that character, and I think it is one of the subjects which might with great public advantage be referred to the Commission for which I ask to-night. As I have said, the principle of cumulation does apply to felonies, but it is applied in the most absurdly capricious and cruel manner. The proposition cannot be too frequently insisted upon, because all experience proves the truth of it, that the efficacy of punishment consists not in its severity, but in its certainty. I hold in my hand a book recently published by Mr. William Tallack, the Secretary of the Howard Association, entitled, "Penological and Preventive Sentences"— rather a forbidding title for a singularly interesting and most useful book. It is a book that has gained the warmest encomiums from men of the first eminence both in this country and abroad, and it seems to me most amply to deserve all the praise it has received. Mr. Tallack says—

> "Whenever a first brief imprisonment has failed to secure its object it should never be repeated. The same ground should never be gone over again. Every subsequent conviction should involve some definite increase of detention. It is of comparatively minor importance if the amount of an additional penalty is but small so long as it is certain to be greater than anyone previously undergone by the same individual. It can hardly be too often repeated or recognized that the main element in the repression of crime is not severity but certainty, and in order to render this the more practicable it must involve moderate and patient gradation."

I commend these observations to the very serious attention of the Government and the House. The cardinal rule which, it seems to me, should be observed in the administration of punishment, is never merely to

repeat. On the other hand, the cumulation of sentences, operating almost with the certainty, the inexorable certainty of natural laws, can hardly fail in the majority of cases to impress the minds of the offenders and produce the most salutary results, as, in fact, wherever it has been fairly tried it has produced satisfactory results. It would be too hopeful to expect that even under such a plan you will in all cases succeed with old offenders. You will still have to keep penal servitude in reserve. Penal servitude should, however, only be given in cases where every other remedy has been tried, whereas, at the present time, as the cases I have put before the House show, penal servitude is frequently imposed most unjustifiably, in the case of conviction for petty felonies. There are some who seem disposed to do away with the difference which the law has hitherto established between mere imprisonment and penal servitude. For my own part I do not sympathize with these views. I think that the gulf which is fixed between the longest term of mere imprisonment and the shortest term of penal servitude is a wise provision, and I think it would be a mistake to endeavour to get rid of it. I hope the Government will lend a favourable ear to the appeal I am making to them. If they do not respond I hope I may make an appeal to the House. But in any case I am so firmly convinced of the practicability of some of the suggestions I have ventured to make, and especially so convinced am I of the salutary effects which would follow from the plan—the credit of which is not mine but Mr. Tallack's—of gradual and moderate cumulation of punishment, both for misdemeanours and felonies, that if I should be so unfortunate as to fail to-night I shall certainly revert to the subject on the first opportunity. I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words

"That the inequality and the irregularity of the sentences pronounced by our Criminal Courts require the immediate and serious attention of the Government, and that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire as to the best means by which greater equality of sentences and the more systematic punishment of repeated offences may be secured."—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

*MR. FORREST FULTON (West Ham, North): The question of the inequality of sentences is one which I think is well worthy of the attention of the Legislature. There can be no doubt at all that there is a wide divergence in the action not only of Judges, but of Chairmen of Quarter Sessions, in the views they take of the particular crimes on which they have to pass sentences. Having had some experience of the administration of the criminal law, I have over and over again been struck with the fact that the sentences passed by one Judge are much more severe than those passed by another in the same court. At the same time I do not agree with my hon. and learned Friend that this is a subject which ought to be referred to a Royal Commission. I think that is about the most unsatisfactory way of dealing with it which could possibly be adopted. We known that when a Royal Commission is appointed on any subject, as a rule nothing whatever is done. My hon. and learned Friend has given us cases in which he says very unequal sentences have been passed. He has referred to the case of a man named Osborne who was sentenced to penal servitude for life for threatening to accuse somebody else of a crime. No doubt that offence has always been regarded by Her Majesty's Judges as one of the most serious offences known to the law, and I understand my hon. and learned Friend to say he also considers it to be a very serious offence. It has always been classed by the Judges with the sending of threatening letters and has practically always been visited with a term of penal servitude. It has been a matter of astonishment to me that when lists of Irish outrages have been commented on in this House the sending of threatening letters has always been pooh-poohed and treated as if it were not a serious offence. Penal servitude for life is a very serious sentence to pass on a boy of 17, and I say without hesitation, and in all humility, that so far as my own opinion is concerned I certainly agree with the course uniformly pursued by the Lord Chief Justice of England of dealing with exceptional leniency with first offences, or

first offences committed after previous convictions, where the previous convictions have taken place a long time ago. When a crime has been committed 10 or 15 years ago, and punishment inflicted, the conviction ought to be wiped out, and the wretched man who has committed another crime after such interval should be allowed to have a fresh start. The sentence on the boy of 17 years to which the hon. and learned Gentleman has referred was a most exorbitant punishment if I may use the expression, and one, the full particulars of which, I should like to hear. The case must have happened a long time ago.

MR. PICKERSGILL: In 1886.

*MR. FORREST FULTON: I am sorry to hear that. I should have thought it would have been more likely to have happened in the year 1826. I entirely agree with my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Pickersgill) that this case should receive the serious consideration of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary. But this is only a detail. My hon. and learned Friend suggests certain remedies. He suggests that there should be a Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the subject, and he throws out other suggestions of a practical character. He says that three years ago three Judges were in the habit of sitting at the Central Criminal Court to lay down rules which were followed in that Court and by Chairmen of Quarter Sessions.

MR. PICKERSGILL: Not by Chairmen of Quarter Sessions, but by Judges.

*MR. FORREST FULTON: Well, I object altogether to that. My experience of what is called the uniform sentences of Judges is that the system has worked unsatisfactorily. I will give an instance. I happen to have the honour to be the senior Counsel to Her Majesty's Post Office in the County of London. There has been a practice for some time of passing in every case a sentence of five years' penal servitude on Post Office servants committing a certain class of offence. I am very glad to say that that rule, though it used formerly to be adopted by the Judges, is now more honoured in the breach than the observance. I am glad to think that the departure from the course which was formerly pursued by the Recorder of London and the Common Serjeant is one that meets with the approval of Her Majesty's Postmaster General. I do not think it would be desirable that there should be a rule laid down by the Judges as to particular cases, for you must rely upon the Judge who tries the case to a very large extent. My hon. and learned Friend refers to newspaper reports of criminal cases. A man steals a trifling article and is sentenced to a very serious and exceptional punishment, and the circumstances of the case are hurriedly reported in the press, the full facts not always appearing. Although the members of the Fourth Estate are very praiseworthy in some respects, the hon. Gentleman will agree with me that they are never so incorrect as in reporting criminal cases. They are seldom near the facts of the case. The reports are hurriedly prepared, and it is impossible for the public to form a true conception of what occurs from the reports that appear in the public press. From my experience in the Metropolis, I must say the sentences are carefully considered by the Judges. The Recorder of London is a man who takes infinite pains in the sentences he passes. He is remarkable amongst all the Judges for the carefulness of his sentences and their lenient description. With regard to the Judges who attend the Central Criminal Court, they do differ no doubt very much as to the view they take of particular crimes. For instance, in regard to the offence of bigamy, some Judges think it a crime of a most serious nature, and of course, it may be most serious. Where a man pretends to be a single man and marries a woman, I have always contended that in substance he commits the offence of rape, and ought to be punished by penal servitude. But on the other hand, there are crimes which are only technically bigamy—in the case, for instance, where the woman knows that the man is married and yet desires that he should marry her for the sake of her status amongst those in the midst of whom she lives. In this latter class of cases most Judges pass sentence of one day's imprisonment, but others condemn the man to a long term of imprisonment, or even to a sentence of penal servitude. The practical question is, Is there a remedy for this state of things? I believe there is, and I believe it is to be found in a properly

constituted Court of Criminal Appeal. But a properly constituted Court of Criminal Appeal, as it has hitherto been proposed by Members of this House, and lawyers of position, is to give an appeal on questions of law only, and that, of course, would not meet the case which the hon. Member has brought before the House. But I see no reason why the question of the adequacy or inadequacy of a sentence should not be brought before such a Court. Throughout the whole of England we have had a very remarkable example of the way in which the Summary Jurisdiction Act has been worked in the matter of summary offences. There is in this country an appeal in every case of conviction by a Magistrate to the Court of Quarter Sessions, and during the two years that I had the honour to act as Counsel to the Treasury, there were constant appeals to Quarter Sessions, where the only ground of appeal was that the sentence passed by the Metropolitan Police Magistrates was excessive—that it should have been a fine instead of imprisonment, or where it was imprisonment, that it should have been for a less term. I did not know until this morning that my hon. and learned Friend intended to bring this matter forward, and I am therefore speaking from memory, but I should think that in 10 per cent of the cases the sentences were reduced from terms of imprisonment to a fine, and terms of imprisonment reduced say from three months to one month. So that we have here a practical illustration of the value of an appeal against a severe sentence. But the matter does not rest there. A Quarter Sessions Appeal is a new hearing; the whole of the case is gone into again and the whole of the witnesses are examined. I do not suppose it would be possible for a Court of Criminal Appeal to re-hear cases and re-examine witnesses. They could have before them written depositions. That is a fair guide of what the facts were at the trial. A case could be stated setting out any fresh circumsntaces or evidence adduced at the trial, or the Judges notes could be referred to, and upon this material, without going through the form of a re-hearing, the whole case might be re-investigated so that a proper and satisfactory result might be arrived at. I may here say that I am not disposed to be so reticent on the subject of Chairmen of Quarter Sessions as the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite. Having had experience of Quarter Sessions in Essex and Hertfordshire and other counties, I think that Quarter Sessions sentences are exactly the sentences we ought to deal with. The Chairmen of Quarter Sessions do undoubtedly pass much heavier sentences than the Judges, and they constantly refuse bail in cases were bail might properly be allowed. There are flagrant cases before both the Chairmen of Quarter Sessions and the Recorders of Boroughs, in which it would be very desirable to overhaul the sentences. One of the objections taken to this suggested revision is, that the Court of Review would be flooded with appeals, and the Judges would be constantly called upon to decide whether a sentence should have been five years or five months; but I think there can be little doubt that if it were thoroughly understood that any defendant who has been convicted before a Judge or Chairman would appeal against the sentence passed upon him to a properly constituted Court of Criminal Appeal, much greater care would be exercised by the Judges or Chairmen than is exercised under existing circumstances. It is notorious that the Judges do not like being overruled; what an anomaly it is that a man who brings an action to recover £20 can go up to the House of Lords, if he thinks it necessary, in order to have the verdict set aside, and that no appeal is permitted in regard to criminal sentences. With reference to the proposal to refer the matter to a Royal Commission, that appears to me to be unsatisfactory; but at the same time I hope this discussion will help to bring about some practical result with regard to the question of police supervision. I have always entertained a very strong opinion that the House of Commons never intended, when the statute was passed, that this power of supervision should be exercised in the way it is, the result being that when a man has served a certain time and has been released on a ticket-of-leave he is so dodged about by the police that he is frequently prevented from getting an honest living. I feel assured that this sort of supervision was never intended to be exercised, unless

under very exceptional circumstances, and mainly with regard to receivers of stolen goods; for men who are convicted of this offence constitute one of the most dangerous classes in the community; and in such cases police supervision is a very excellent thing. In the way however, in which the power has been used, it has proved most mischievous, and I hear on all hands that, instead of exercising a wise and beneficial influence on the interests of accused persons, it has had exactly the contrary effect. Under these circumstances, though I am unable to support the Resolution of the hon. and learned Gentleman in the form in which it has been brought forward, I am glad that the matter has been brought under the attention of the House, and I hope it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to make a proposal which will in some way meet the object in view.

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, East): I quite agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down, that the House is indebted to the hon. and learned Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill) for bringing forward this grave and important question, one that in my judgment has long demanded the attention of Parliament. I hope that this evening will not be allowed to pass away without some indication from the Government that a practical result will follow the debate in which we are now engaged. The hon. and learned Gentleman who has just spoken has agreed in the main with the case which has been made out by the hon. and learned Member for Bethnal Green, but I would point out that we ought not to confine the consideration of this question to the mere severity of the sentences that are passed; we ought also to consider the other points of the Motion on the Paper —namely, "the inequality and irregularity of the sentences pronounced by our Criminal Courts," and "the more systematic punishment of repeated offences." My hon. Friend, in introducing this subject, did not indicate that there was any great growth in the amount of punishment inflicted, or any great increase in our criminal population. It is a matter upon which the country may congratulate itself that there has been for many years a steady decrease, not only in the prison population, but also in the convict population, and that at the present moment there are proportionately fewer people in average prison life, and also fewer prisoners undergoing penal servitude than have ever been known since statistics have been obtainable on the subject. If we go back for a period of 20 years we find that the average prison population was 17,500, and to-day it is 14,500, although the population has increased 5,000,000. In 1871 the number of persons under sentence of penal servitude was 11,700; the number last year had come down to 6,900. We may, I think, congratulate ourselves that in a population of 28,000,000, our convict population is below 7,000. Although we are obliged to my hon. Friend for having drawn attention to this question, I cannot but admit that it is a very difficult one for Parliament to deal with. I am a strong advocate for drawing a very sharp line between the action of the Legislature and the action of the Judiciary; and it is only in extreme and grave cases that Parliament should interfere with what I may call the regular action of the Judges. But with reference to the infliction of sentences, that is a power invested in the Judges by Parliament. We have given an enormous breadth of judicial discretion, and there is no country in the world in which so vast an amount of discretion is entrusted to the Judiciary as in this country—a fact which becomes more serious when applied to the case of trials at Quarter Sessions. Moreover, there is in this country a complete absence of any system or standard of punishment such as other systems of jurisprudence have. In the Continental Codes we find a system of fixed punishment with only a very small margin of discretion; whereas we are without any system at all, for unless it be that the Judges have an understanding among themselves, of which I am ignorant, I know of no rule except that under which all offences against the Post Office are treated with exceptional severity. Another discouraging feature in the jurisprudence of this country is that we have no Court of Criminal Appeal. I think the motion is justified on three grounds—namely, the breadth allowed to judicial discretion, the absence of a fixed code of punishments, and the

want of a Court of Criminal Appeal. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite has admitted the disproportion constantly observable in the sentences passed by different Judges for the same kind of offence, as well as the extraordinary severity of some of the sentences passed. I have no wish to give the names of particular individuals, nor to bring forward particular cases, because this House could not have all the facts before it that were brought before the Judges at the time, and upon which they were induced to act. But I will take a class of cases which came under my knowledge a few years ago. One of the learned Judges who were associated with them is now dead, and the other learned Judge has been remitted to another sphere; but those two Judges were sitting at the same time at two different assizes—one in the county of Stafford, and the other in the county of York. They were trying a certain class of offences. The Judge at Leeds was inflicting, for this particular kind of offence, a punishment of two years' hard labour; but the Judge at Stafford was imposing for the same offence 20 years' penal servitude. Now, it is evident that either one sentence was absurdly small or the other was grotesquely severe. Again, you may notice an enormous disproportion in the punishments inflicted for bigamy and other offences against the person, with regard to which there are some Judges who hold very strong opinions, while there are other Judges who hold strong opinions as to offences against property—each class of offence being treated by these Judges with exceptional severity. Taking what is the course pursued to-day, as a whole, we find that the punishments are far more severe where property is involved than where offences against the person are involved. It may be said that after all this is only the survival of what was a reasonable practice 100 years ago when society was accustomed to defend itself against acts of violence by acts of violence. It was an essential part of a gentleman's costume in those days to wear swords, with the intention to use them, and they did use them. While there was then a protection against personal violence which does not now exist, property is at the present time much more efficiently protected than it was then. Then there was no organized police or detective force, and society inflicted terrible penalties against sheep-stealing, horse-stealing, and other offences against property in order to protect itself. The main offences against property now are of a petty character, whereas, on the other hand, it is a sad fact that offences against the person are increasing, and offences against the person are not as severely punished at the present day as they ought to be. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green has mentioned some cases of severe punishments, and I mention one other, that of a man who was sentenced to 12 years' penal servitude and seven years' police supervision for stealing a piece of canvas. Altogether that man had, at different times, been sentenced to 34 years' imprisonment and penal servitude and seven years' police supervision. These are sentences which no reason can justify in a humane and Christian country. With regard to the sentences in Post Office cases, I remember a very learned Judge telling me that nothing would induce him to pass the sentence of five years' penal servitude simply because it was a Post Office case. I am delighted to hear that this meets with the approval of the Postmaster General, because there has been an impression that the legal advisers of the Post Office pressed for these severe punishments. With regard to embezzlement cases, bank robberies, and the graver cases of breaches of trust, it is contended that severe sentences are justified. What is wanted is to deter others from committing the same offence, and also, no doubt, to mark the gravity of the crime the particular offender has committed; but I wonder whether hon. Members realize what such sentences as seven, 10, or 15 years' penal servitude involve? A man who commits any of those offences loses his character, his prospects are ruined, his wife is condemned to an awful widowhood, and his children are orphans. To condemn that man to 10 or 15 years of slavery in addition is an excess of punishment which cannot be justified. I remember when I was at the Home Office a very learned Judge, now not alive, was conducted over

Portland Prison, and when he saw what penal servitude really was, he learned what penal servitude really was, and he stated that if he had known what that punishment really was he should not have passed some of the sentences he had inflicted. In my opinion long terms of penal servitude ought not to be passed on habitual offenders. Reference has been made to sentences passed at Quarter Sessions, and the hon. Member who has just sat down has referred to their severity. The official statistics show that in 1887 there were 1,806 sentences passed at Quarter Sessions exceeding six months' imprisonment with hard labour, and of those 331 were sentences of penal servitude. Perhaps, standing by itself, that, compared with sentences at Assizes, may not be a disproportionate average. What struck me most were the sentences in cases of offences against property committed without violence, for which last year there were passed 245 sentences of penal servitude. For simple larceny alone 140 sentences of penal servitude were passed. That shows a case for inquiry as to whether there are facts in connection with cases of simple larceny in this country which justifies such sentences. We have to consider the effect of those sentences upon society itself and upon the criminals. I would call the attention of the House to what has been going on in Liverpool during the last three years. Mr. Hopwood was appointed Recorder of Liverpool three years ago, and at the commencement of his duties there he laid down a principle which he intended to adopt of imposing much milder sentences than had theretofore been the practice. He was exposed to much public criticism in consequence of the opinions he then expressed. We have now got statistics for three years, and I think the House will admit that is a fair period in which to test the working of his plan. Mr. Hopwood gives a review of the last three years. The total number of prisoners during the preceding three years—that is the three years before Mr. Hopwood was appointed—was 1,889, the total punishment of whom was 1,681 years, 3 months, and 7 days, or an average of 10 months per prisoner. One-third of these 1,889 prisoners pleaded guilty. During the last three years, where these milder sentences have been passed the number tried has been 1,608, a reduction of nearly 300, and the punishments inflicted during the three years has amounted to 408 years, or an average of 3 months against 10, the number who pleaded guilty being one-half. Mr. Hopwood says—

> "If the total imprisonment of the later three years be deducted from the additional imprisonment of the three former years, then there is this large reduction of punishment, which represents a saving of human misery which anyone may estimate for himself, and a saving of any actual charge to the nation of £20 per head per annum. Of the total of prisoners during the last three years 600 had been previously convicted, and had returned from sentences inflicted in earlier years, and were not, therefore, the product of the system now adopted."

The argument of Mr. Hopwood is practically this, that by his milder sentences crime has been reduced and not increased, and I think that is an end the House wants to reach. But, Sir, we have been talking to-night exclusively about penal servitude. A short time ago a well known correspondent of the *Times*, who is supposed to be a Law Lord, stated that two years' imprisonment with hard labour was about the extreme punishment which the ordinary man could bear. According to the present authorities, five years' penal servitude, which is reducible by good conduct to something like three years and nine months, is not so severe as two years' imprisonment under our present system. I cannot defend that state of things. I do not think there ought to be those variations in the nature and extent of the punishment. I think a great deal may be said in favour of the consolidation of punishment so as to have something like similarity of treatment. But now I want to come to the practical question, because I do not know whether hon. Members are going to dispute the position taken up with so much force by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green—namely, that disproportionate sentences are passed by different Judges, and that we have no uniformity of punishment. What is the remedy? My hon. Friend asks for a Royal Commission. The hon. Member below the Gangway suggests the establishment of a Court of Appeal. The Solicitor General, when he had not

the responsibilities of office upon him, expressed himself in this House in very clear language on this question the last time it was brought before him, in favour of a Court of Criminal Appeal. He said:

"Sentences of penal servitude were passed with a light heart by Judges who sometimes did not know the amount of misery they were inflicting upon the unfortunate creatures they sentenced. He was sure that this point in the administration of the Criminal Law brought a great deal of anxiety upon the Secretary of State who was implored to consider the terrible sentences that had been passed, and there can be no reason why appeals in such cases should not be allowed."

The Solicitor General was followed in the debate by the then Home Secretary, who pointed out that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth had admitted that one of the great misfortunes and scandals of our criminal jurisprudence was the inequality of sentences given by criminal Judges for the same offence. What has been the result of appeal in civil cases? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bury in 1883 told the House that during the six preceding years 44 per cent of the decisions taken to the Court of Appeal were reversed, and only 56 per cent confirmed. That is a strong proof of the liability of Courts of the First Instance to err. My right hon. Friend the then Attorney General, and now Member for Hackney, said that 25 per cent of the applications for new trials were granted. No doubt the Home Secretary will point out the difficulties there would be in constituting a Court of Criminal Appeal, owing to the large number of cases that would come before it. I do not deny that there are difficulties attending the constitution of a Court of Criminal Appeal, but I believe that advantages would vastly outweigh the drawback. There ought to be something like uniformity of punishment; something like a distinct understanding that a certain measure of punishment should be inflicted for a certain class of offence, and it is because I see the difficulty of dealing with the question of disproportionate sentences, unless we get the sympathy and support of the Judges in carrying out the reform, that I support the Motion of my hon. and learned friend for the appointment of the Royal Commission. The question is one well worthy of grave and judicial inquiry. Some of the best legislation we have had has been the result of inquiries by Royal Commissions, and I think the Judges should have brought before them, and the country should have brought before it, the actual working of our judicial system. I think that a Royal Commission will afford far better means of securing this end than speeches in this House. I am satisfied that our present judicial system is not humane; we are inflicting for certain offences punishments which are inflicted in no other civilized country in the world. The Motion is one which should command the sympathy of the Government, and I am sure the matter is well worthy of complete, judicial, and accurate inquiry.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): The hon. and learned Member for Bethnal Green has suggested that in some better kind of Penal Code offences might be marked off from one another by a sharp line of definition; but I know of no Code so perfect as to completely distinguish between all the different degrees of the same crime. The definition of burglary—"entering by force a house at night"—is as simple as can be; but how can any limitations prevent its including offences really of a most trivial character? If confusion between crimes of various characters is to be prevented, it can only be done by a Committee of Judges or some such body, and not by a Royal Commission. Taking the Criminal Law as it stands it would have to be reformed from top to bottom if no discretion is to be left to the Judges. It is the English system to leave—and the confidence has been fully justified—to those who administer the law the largest amount of discretion in order that they may fit punishment to the infinitely varying circumstances of crime. There is only one instance in the Criminal Code where a minimum of punishment is fixed—namely, the period of ten years of penal servitude for certain unnatural offences. Generally it is the maximum of punishment that is laid down, and as far as my experience goes that one minimum penalty of ten years' penal servitude has wrought very great mischief. If a

large discretion is vested in the Judges, it follows that their decisions cannot suit all tastes. Nor would a Royal Commission necessarily help the hon. Member for Bethnal Green; for it is the Royal Commission of 1864 which added to the severity of punishments. Nothing but the teaching of experience will by degrees bring Judges of all classes to discover by tentative process what scale of punishment is the most efficacious in preventing crime. It must be generally admitted that only such a degree of punishment ought to be inflicted as is sufficient for deterring a man from repeating a crime or others from committing it. A single day's imprisonment beyond the necessary period is a great injury, not so much to the prisoner as to his wife and family who are dependent upon him. I think that the right hon. Gentleman went a little too far when he cited the authority of the learned Recorder of Liverpool as conclusive on that matter. I do not think that such experience as we have had of his mode of administering punishment is sufficient to demonstrate that his plan is entirely right. But this much, I believe, is demonstrated by the figures which appear in their judicial statistics, that the existing system during the last 10 years has not been a bad one for the general purposes of society. There has been an extraordinary diminution of crime, which is most satisfactory, since the Summary Jurisdiction Act of 1879 was passed. As a result of the passing of the Act of 1879, you have a decrease in the number of offences tried by indictment. In 1879, 12,500 persons were convicted on indictment, and, in 1887, only 10,380. Summary convictions at first increased, but the general result of the system has been to diminish crime in a most satisfactory way, and ultimately there has also been a remarkable decrease in the number of persons summarily convicted. Tried by its fruits the present system certainly does not deserve wholesale condemnation. I will not enter into the individual cases to which the hon. Member has referred. It is difficult, no doubt, to understand how anything could justify the passing of a sentence of penal servitude for life on a boy. But what the hon. Member seems to treat as his main point was that he would like to introduce a system of graduated penalties beginning from one month and rising to two months, three months, and so on; and only after a long series of offences arriving at the ultimate penalty of penal servitude. That, no doubt, may sound very reasonable, but it would be impossible to lay it down as a cast-iron rule for every case. A first offence might be a burglary, and the second the stealing of an apple; and the punishment for the second offence in such a case must be lighter than the sentence passed upon the first. But in 99 instances out of 100 the Judges already follow substantially the rule which the hon. Member has pointed out as being desirable. In the vast majority of cases they deal with first offences by light sentences, and with subsequent offences by heavier punishments. I know of no more heart-breaking problem than that of how to treat a class of people who pass their lives in criminal courses. These miserable creatures have no resources when they get out of prison and no faculties apparently but to commit offences such as petty larceny. Such persons cannot be allowed to go on without punishment of some sort. And yet the repetitions of slight punishments seems to have little or no effect upon them. If the hon. Gentleman looks at the last Return of the Prisons Commissioners he will find no indication of dealing too severely with persons who have been convicted more than once. The total number of persons who were committed to local prisons in the year ending March 31, 1888, was 104,000 odd males and 31,000 odd females. In the next Table he will find that no fewer than 51,000 odd males and 25,000 females had been convicted before, either once, twice, thrice, or more than 10 times; and he will also observe this remarkable fact—that whereas the women who had been previously convicted more than once in all the columns except the last were less numerous than the men, when they came to persons convicted more than 10 times there were 5,700 odd men and 8,600 odd women. With regard to the imprisonment of children, the case of every child under 10 years of age who is sent to prison is specially brought before the Home Office and considered at once. In the

Mr. Matthews

Reformatory and Industrial Schools Bill, which will be before the House of Lords in a few days, and which I have spent a considerable amount of time in preparing, I have endeavoured to suggest a variety of alternative modes of dealing with juvenile offenders so as to avoid sending them to prison. With respect to the sentences which the Judges pass in Post Office cases, I do not think that these, any more than the sentences of former days in forgery cases, ought to be viewed with too much severity by the House. In a country like this where the credit of commercial instruments is of such immense importance to the community it must be protected by punishments that are likely to be deterrent. I had a Post Office case before me the other day in which a sentence of five years penal servitude had been passed. In this case a woman of previous exemplary character had concocted a series of deliberate frauds, altering savings bank books, forging receipts, and robbing her neighbours of their little savings. That appeared to be a case in which a severe punishment was deserved. I may add, I think it well to keep down sentences to that point at which they may be considered to be deterrent. I think that five, or six, or seven years is terribly deterrent, but if you go beyond that the punishment often ceases to be deterrent. I think the suggestion of a Court of Appeal in the larger sense used by the right hon. Gentleman opposite for retrying cases on their merits is not practicable. I do not think, however, that it would be an impossibility to have a Court of Appeal which should simply revise sentences and act, so to speak, as a sort of sieve.

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: That was my suggestion.

*Mr. MATTHEWS: Then I beg pardon. I thought the right hon. Gentleman's proposal was that the Court of Appeal should re-try cases on their merits, which would be impracticable. At the same time there are a great many matters that must be weighed on both sides, before the other suggestion can be adopted. I am afraid that the great Judge would no longer be feared as he now is in the Assize towns, if it were known that his sentences were subject to revision. When we are asked for a Commission to inquire into these matters, I cannot help pointing out that a Commission seems to be useless, as the facts are not in dispute. There is really nothing for a Commission to inquire into. All they could do would be to examine a great number of experts, and ask them the best way of making sentences uniform. That is not an inquiry which in my opinion could be usefully trusted to a Royal Commission. The Government itself ought to be able to make up its mind as to whether any of the changes suggested by the hon. Member should be carried out, and I doubt very much whether they could derive any assistance from a Royal Commission. Therefore, although I am in sympathy on many points with the hon. Member, I am bound to differ from him in his main conclusion, and to say we could not consent to the appointment of a Royal Commission.

*Mr. NEVILLE (Liverpool, Exchange): I have listened with the greatest interest to this debate, and I only rise to point out to the House that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) has, I think, given us the strongest possible illustration of the inequality of the Criminal Law as it exists at the present time, and of the necessity, at all events, of an inquiry to see whether something cannot be done to alter and ameliorate it. The right hon. Gentleman gave us the case of a young girl who was properly convicted by a jury of burglary. He says, and very accurately, that this is one of the results of the extreme simplicity of the definition of burglary in our law. That is just the point. Where you have these extremely simple definitions you necessarily include in them an enormous number of offences of greatly varying magnitude. And what is the result? The girl whose sentence to a day's imprisonment not only affects all the audience in the Court but moved the Judge himself to tears, was convicted of precisely the same offence as the man who, with others, armed with revolvers, comes into your house, robs you of your goods and is prepared to take your life either for the purpose of securing his booty or avoiding apprehension. Surely the state of the Criminal Law must be wrong if in the eye of that law these two offenders are guilty of precisely the

same offence. Though it is quite true that the Judge in criminal cases must exercise a discretion, it cannot be right that the discretion should be so enormous that by the sentence he imposes he is to mark the distinction between the offence of the young girl and the armed burglar, while the law itself makes no distinction between the two. The right hon. Gentleman told us that the Judges must try to see what sentence really is deterrent and how far in severity they need to go. I venture to think that judicial life is much too short for such an inquiry and it shows the necessity of the sentence appropriate to any particular offence being decided not by one Judge but by a Bench of Judges, so that the Judge should have something to guide him as to how particular offences should be met. It seems to me that these are matters which ought to be carefully and judicially considered by a Commission. I cannot think we have arrived at the height of human wisdom in our present criminal system. I think it is capable of improvement, and I think the best way of arriving at that improvement and amendment would be to grant an inquiry by a Royal Commission.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): I should not, perhaps, have intervened in this debate had it not been for the reference made by more than one speaker to the case of Government Office offences, which have been cited as illustrations of the worst evils attending on our present system of criminal sentences. I have before been anxious, as far as I myself am concerned, to give to the House the most positive assurance that I have felt the extreme unpopularity and undesirability of the uniform system of severe sentences which have in former days followed offences against the Post Office. Almost immediately after I took office I read in a newspaper that a learned Judge, in passing sentence at some assizes in the country, had said that whatever might be his own view as to the amount of punishment due to the offence, he felt himself bound, by the views he believed to be entertained by the Postmaster General, to follow a fixed standard of punishment, and inflict on the offender a sentence of five years' penal servitude. I am rather inclined to question the propriety of a Judge fortifying his own decision in a particular case by referring to the supposed views of the Postmaster General, and I think I was, in the circumstances, justified in addressing a letter to the learned Judge to assure him that he was misinformed as to the views of the Post Office, and that so far from believing that a uniform sentence of five years was a protective to the public and the Post Office, I believed, on the other hand, that, by the disinclination which it produced on the minds of jurors to convict, such a sentence was most detrimental to the interests of the public, and subjected *employés* of the Post Office to the most serious temptation. Since that time I am glad to say the Judges have exercised a much more general discretion in the sentences they have passed. For my own part I have always felt that, where the offence is a first offence and without circumstances of aggravation, a much less punishment may be sufficient to protect the public and to deter Post Office servants from any of these crimes. I felt it was perhaps right I should say this as the question of the Post Office offences has been so prominently brought forward in the course of the debate. But I must confess that the interest I take in this subject is not at all confined to my experience in my present official position. It has been my fortune for many years to act as a Magistrate and to sit as Chairman of Quarter Sessions, though I have never held the proud position of permanent Chairman. I have therefore seen something of the way law is administered by Magistrates and by Quarter Sessions, and I should like at the outset to say a word with regard to the point raised by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill) as to police supervision being viewed in a different manner by Judges and by Quarter Sessions. So far as my experience goes I should say that where the police supervision has formed part of the sentence, it has almost invariably been with the view of reducing the sentence. The arguments have run over a wide field, but it is not difficult to deduce from them that more than one train of thought has been working in the minds of hon. Members on both sides. We have been told that it is very undesirable that we should

give the Judges the extended discretion which at the present they exercise, and almost in the same breath, and by the same speeches, we have had illustrations given of Judges who have been commended for the extremely light sentences which they have thought it their duty to pass. More than one hon. Member has really had in view quite as much a reform of the Criminal Law, as the question of rendering uniform our present code of punishment by some Procrustean means. I cannot help thinking that if some such system as appears to be intended by Mr. Tallack, some regular scheme of punishment graduated so as to meet all sorts of cases, were adopted, the hon. Gentlemen who have come down to the House to protest against the discretionary power of the Judges would be the first persons to protest against that Procrustean system, which would not allow the discretion of the Court in dealing with particular circumstances. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) has expressed the views of the Government upon this question, and therefore I speak for myself only when I say I have for many years been inclined to share the views of those who think the Criminal Law is a great deal too severe in dealing with small offences against property. I have felt and seen how extremely cruel has been the operation of the system of cumulative sentences in many cases. I remember, many years ago, sitting in the Second Court at Chester, trying some prisoners, and among others a man charged with stealing a goose. The man had just come out of penal servitude and had been twice or three times previously convicted. When the jury had convicted him I said to the clerk, "I suppose there is some regular and recognized system by which the Chairman of Quarter Sessions sentences prisoners under such circumstances?" The clerk said—"We always expect a prisoner under these circumstances to have five years' penal servitude." I said—"Do you really and seriously suppose it is possible I should sentence this man to five years' penal servitude for stealing a goose?" He, of course, had to submit to the views of the magistrate, and I gave the man six weeks or two months. It really does not appear to me to be consistent that hon. Members should denounce the severity of the law, and yet at the same time, also denounce the system which gives to the Judge or Chairman the power of mitigating the operation of the law. These are two quite separate issues which ought to be kept entirely distinct. The hon. Member suggests the appointment of a Royal Commission. That is merely a Parliamentary way of saying that something ought to be done. I think it will be admitted that there is a disposition on both sides of the House to recognize the imperfection of the present administration of the Criminal Law. There is no question between us on that point, but there is, no doubt, very considerable difference of opinion as to how far we should be justified in referring a question of this sort to a Royal Commission. It seems to me that a Royal Commission would have to be armed with extremely wide powers if they were to be able to give effect to the suggestions which have been brought forward. I do not see that we could refer the whole question of the reform of the Criminal Law to a Royal Commission. That appears to me to be a matter which falls within the responsibility of the Government of the day. If the law requires to be altered, it is the duty of the Government to take steps to alter it. To hand the consideration of the question over to a Commission would merely have the effect of protracting and delaying the settlement of a matter which is really of urgent and serious importance, and of weakening the responsibility of the Government, and making it less likely that we would obtain a serious and satisfactory amendment of the law. There was another subject touched on by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for West Ham (Mr. F. Fulton), and also by one or more of the other speakers, and that was the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal with regard to sentences. I confess that while I entertain very grave doubt as to the utility or the effect of a Royal Commission on this question, I entertain the very greatest objections to the institution of a Court of Criminal Appeal as regards sentences. The system of appeal which prevails in civil cases where an appellant is not restricted from going to a Court of

Appeal if he thinks he would be better off there than in the Court below, appears to be distinct and separate from a system of appeal relating to criminal cases. A man who has been sentenced to a long term of imprisonment for a criminal offence has nothing to lose by going to a Court of Appeal, and there is nothing to prevent every prisoner from appealing. It is said a system might be established by which the Court of Appeal could increase sentences. I do not think that that is possible or that public opinion would support such a system. Without such a power the Court of Appeal would be reduced to the position of a Court of Review simply, and we have at present a most efficient Court of Review in the Home Secretary for the time being. The sentences are reviewed by the Secretary of State not from a purely legal point of view; and the Secretary of State has the assistance of the Judges who tried the cases which come before him. The decisions of the Home Secretary are not influenced by articles in newspapers or by counsel, and I consider the tribunal a very efficient one. We undoubtedly have in the prerogative of mercy, administered by the Secretary of State in the name of the Crown, an excellent corrective for extravagant and cruel sentences; and I doubt whether any Court of Appeal would constitute a more satisfactory tribunal to review the decisions of the Courts below. But when I say this I do not for a moment wish to minimize the scandal which is caused by the extraordinary differences in the sentences passed by Judges; but I believe that the Home Office, encouraged as it is likely to be by debates of this sort, will more and more venture to exercise a controlling influence upon such sentences without the apparatus and pomp and apparent efficiency of a Court of Appeal. Judges like other people make serious mistakes; but I am inclined to think they are less likely to make mistakes under the present system than under the system of a Court of Appeal composed of Judges who will have a natural desire to affirm the decisions of the Court below. And let me remind the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) with regard to the statistics as to appeals of which he quoted, that all the decisions the Civil Courts below did not come up for appeal, whereas we may be certain that all criminal sentences will be appealed against in the event of the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal. I cannot help thinking that if hon. Gentlemen analyze their own feelings, they will find that they are founded on a vague dissatisfaction with the state of the Criminal Law, and I do not think their origin is due to the exercise of discretion by the Judges. The punishment of a great many offences is felt to be too severe, and I believe any Parliament, any Ministry, will deserve well of their countrymen who take into most serious consideration the present incidence of punishments in Courts of Law in regard to offences both against property and person, and the disproportions therein. A Parliament which succeeds in dealing satisfactorily with this question, will have a stronger claim to the gratitude of both contemporaries and posterity, than those who accomplish some showy and demonstrative legislation.

*Mr. SHIRESS WILL (Montrose, &c.): No one who sympathizes with the Resolution of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green can complain of the speeches delivered from the Front Bench, and, indeed, I think the speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Raikes) affords the strongest possible argument in favour of issuing the Royal Commission asked for. The right hon. Gentleman told us, from his experience as Chairman of Quarter Sessions, how, consulting the clerk as to the sentence on the poor creature in the dock below, he was advised that five years' penal servitude was the proper sentence. Fortunately in this case the right hon. Gentleman was able to bring his better judgment to bear, and the unfortunate criminal got off with six weeks' imprisonment. I do not think anything could be more clearly in favour of the Motion. Some of us who have experience of the law, perhaps some little experience of the Criminal Law, have wondered why it is that the law

has said, that if a man commits a felony the punishment shall be imprisonment up to two years, or else penal servitude for five years or more. Why is it? There is another marvellous discrepancy. Suppose a man has committed a felony once and is then convicted of a second felony, the Judge has discretion to sentence that man to penal servitude, but he cannot do it for less than five years. But he may sentence him to a month's imprisonment. Look at the marvellous gap between these extremes. The Judge is not required to sentence him to penal servitude, but this vast discretion is given the Judge, and there is no one to review the decision. It has been said that one of the reasons why we cannot have a Court of Appeal in criminal cases is because there is no power to give costs against the persons who appeal. Why we all know, or we have read of the injustice that has been sometimes done by wrong convictions on what is called circumstantial evidence. Let me take one case out of hundreds that might be mentioned. Eliza Fleming, a poor servant girl, was convicted of administering poison to the family for whom she worked. She was sentenced to the gallows, and she went there calm and serene as an angel, and she died innocent. Ought such a one to be refused an appeal because she could not pay costs? Is this the ground on which this House would refuse the common justice of an appeal? There is one point I wish very strongly to urge on the Front Bench in support of this claim for a Royal Commission. It is over and over again said of people who are of the criminal class that they are convicted again and again; they are gaol birds, habitual criminals and all the rest of it; but does anybody ever try for a moment to enter into their minds and see what it is that influences them? Does it ever occur to hon. Members—I am sure it does—that sometimes these people become hardened from a sense of injustice; that sometimes, though rarely, they are wrongly convicted, but more often sentences are inflicted unfitted to the offences committed, and they go away with a burning sense of wrong in their hearts? Is this the way to redeem them. Ought there not to be some Court of Criminal Appeal? Why if it is a question of a debt of £100 a man may carry his case to the Court of Appeal and again to the House of Lords; it does not matter whether he be rich or poor, he has this right of appeal. The Court has some discretion as to costs which I need not enter into now. Is it to be said that liberty is of less account than property? Is it to be said a man's life, or 20 years of his life, are of so small account that you allow him no appeal from the sentence of, it may be, an angry Judge? Judges, after all, are but men, and many a time a Judge is apt to be angry because he believes an offence is greater than it really is, and so is apt to make his words and his sentence the more strong. Is there to be no appeal from these errors of judgment? The Motion of my hon. Friend has shown once more that here are matters requiring very careful consideration. Those outside this House who to-morrow read the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) will understand how it is we have this state of the law; they will see that it is because in the past our desire and our efforts have been in the wrong direction; we have been trying to protect property instead of liberty. My right hon. Friend has pointed out more clearly than I have ever known it done before, how in the past, before we had a proper system of police, we were anxious by punishment to deter from crime against property; but now our efforts should be to wean people from crime. I am quite sure that both sides of the House are equally alive

to that, and will be willing to devise for the future some system by which the wide discretion of the Judge shall be limited by some means of appeal. For committing a felony a man may be liable to a penalty of a day's imprisonment or penal servitude for life. This wide discretion is too much to leave uncontrolled to any man. You cannot expect men, even when Judges, to be archangels, and we must devise some safeguard, leave open some means to revise these momentous decisions. I will not sit down without acknowledging the fair and sympathethic manner in which the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary has addressed himself to this question. I am perfectly sure that every case that comes before him will never lack labour bestowed upon it. No man who knows his generosity of heart, his capacity for work, his sympathy for the poor and unfortunate, will doubt that the right hon. Gentleman will give to every case brought before him a full and candid consideration.

*MR. C. W. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.): I confess that I am a little confused by the observations that have fallen from two distinguished occupants of the First Bench below me, and am led to ask for some further explanation from that quarter. Seeing that the Under Secretary of State for the Home Office has been taking notes, no doubt he will supplement, explain, or reconcile the diverse opinions expressed by his official superiors. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Matthews) stated in pretty clear terms that it was the intention of the Government to establish some sort of a Court of Appeal to revise criminal sentences. [MR. MATTHEWS dissented.] Then I misunderstood my right hon. Friend even more than I thought I had. At any rate, he conveyed to my mind the impression that the Government had in contemplation something of the kind. I do not think if my right hon. Friend reflects on what he said :—

MR. MATTHEWS: What I said is of less importance, but as expressing the intention, and speaking on behalf of the Government I do not wish to be misunderstood. All I said was that the subject of a Court to review criminal sentences had been carefully considered by the Government.

*MR. COOKE: I suppose, Sir, with some object. I should like to hear what was the result of that consideration, because at present we are left in a very doubtful condition. I supposed after hearing these observations from my right hon. Friend, that either from his lips or those of some other Member of the Government we should hear a little more on the subject; but when the Postmaster General so completely set his foot down on a Court of Appeal or a Court of Review of any sort or kind, then I felt I was thrown entirely upon the Motion of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, with no course open to me but to accept it and support his demand for a Royal Commission; for if the Government have had under consideration the question of a Court of Appeal and have done nothing, and if the Postmaster General thinks it is impracticable to appoint such a tribunal, then there is not much hope from the Front Bench that independently of external initiative that Court of Appeal will be appointed, which by common consent of both sides seems to be desired. When the hon. Member for the Exchange Division of Liverpool (Mr. Neville) rose to address the House, I hoped, knowing the constituency he represents, and the feelings entertained in that part of the world with regard to the views of Mr. Hopwood, that possibly he might have corrected to some extent the inferences drawn from the conduct of

Mr. Hopwood by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. H. H. Fowler). Those who read the Press of both sides in Liverpool, the Conservative as well as the Radical, will find that there is by no means a concensus of opinion as to the advantage of the working out of Mr. Hopwood's ideas of what he considers his duty, but, on the contrary, a very strong view that he has acted wrongly in his method of procedure. It has been suggested, indeed I do not know whether it may be the fact, that the diminution in the number of prisoners brought before him is because committing Magistrates do not send prisoners to Mr. Hopwood's Court. I will not say whether this is the explanation or not, but the inference the right hon. Gentleman draws from Mr. Hopwood's conduct cannot be accepted without a little further investigation. The right hon. Gentleman also gave us a very interesting account of a visit paid by a learned Judge to the convict prison at Portland, and how experience thus gained taught that learned Judge some part of his duty with which he was unacquainted before. Well, last week I visited the convict prison at Portland, and if it is valuable to a Judge's experience, then it is a qualification for office I venture humbly to present to Her Majesty's Government. I can, at all events, confirm the right hon. Gentleman in one thing, the great diminution in the number of prisoners in convict prisons. I was told that the inmates were less than they had ever been before, and the officials informed me that this was also the case in other similar establishments in the country. A good deal has been said in regard to the definition of offences, and the discretion of Judges. For my own part, I think the precise definition of offence is a great safety to prisoners, almost as great as the discretion allowed to Judges. But if we do not accept the suggestion of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, and have nothing else from the Front Bench, we shall have a state of things continuing by which Judges gain experience in the exercise of their discretion at the expense of prisoners. It was once said, "Wretches hang that jurymen may dine," so now Judges will send prisoners to Portland in order to learn when not to send them there. Surely my right hon. Friend did not mean that. If there is to be a review of sentences by the Home Office on a very much larger scale, we shall want several additional Home Secretaries. Unless we have something more clear and definite from the Front Bench in reference to the appointment of some Court to review sentences, in favour of which there seems to be a general opinion on both sides, I shall be compelled logically and inevitably to vote for the Resolution before us.

MR. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow): I do not agree with my hon. Friend that there is a general concensus of opinion on this question. I have listened attentively to the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, and he assumed rather than proved the inequality and irregularity of sentences pronounced in our Criminal Courts. What were the bases of the statement he made? He did not tell us, in one single instance, from what source he obtained his information; but we know that it could not have been from any other source than the newspapers. Well, we all know what newspaper reports are of cases that are tried before Judges. Speaking for myself, I may say that I have read reports of cases in which I have been engaged the previous day, and, but for the names, in many instances I should not have recognized them. Yet from newspaper reports — necessarily condensed and frequently incorrect—we are called upon to condemn Her Majesty's Judges or Chairmen of Quarter Sessions in regard to sentences passed from time to time. The ob-

jection applies equally to this Motion for a Royal Commission. It would be, in some sense, a reflection on the administration of our Criminal Law; and it is one of the last things the House ought to do to cast doubt on the fairness and propriety with which the Criminal Law is carried out. If you have a Royal Commission, is it to investigate sentences, and say whether there have been these irregularities and inequalities spoken of? How could a Commission do it, unless the Commission re-tried every case, and had every circumstance before it which was before the Judge when he arrived at his decision and passed his sentence? You could not, after lapse of time, have all the attendant circumstances forthcoming as they were originally presented to the Court. Sentences are necessarily unequal and irregular, because crimes are unequal and irregular. You do not have the same offence committed under the same circumstances, and the Legislature has, therefore, wisely invested Judges with a wide discretion. If you have a hard and fast line in reference to the punishment for particular offences, then you must compel Judges to inflict sentences from which they would shrink and which might be cruel in the extreme. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green gave an illustration which tells against the position he assumes—a case of housebreaking or burglary. He put a case of housebreaking under circumstances in which the highest penalty would not in the least degree be too severe, and then he put the case of a starving person, who, immediately after the technical hour, nine o'clock, lifts a window and steals a loaf, and he says this is equally burglary. This is exactly what legislation has provided for, and for which the Judge has discretionary power. If you establish a hard and fast line, and say that as soon as an offence answers to a description in the Penal Code, then a particular penalty shall attach, you will immediately have outcries from hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the hardships and inequalities of the law because a case comes under the definition of a heavy offence, though attendant circumstances demand a more lenient consideration. I have failed to discover in any of the speeches that have been delivered that there has been any abuse on the part of Judges of the discretion allowed them, though there may be this difference, that one Judge takes a more serious view of one particular offence than another; that is inevitable; but I fail to see that there is any real injustice. I admit it is important to have certainty of punishment, but still it must be determined by the Judge according to attendant circumstances. I have referred to the remedy by Royal Commission. I have said that it must cast a slur on the administration of justice and be ineffective for the purpose for which it is intended. As to the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal, I have no objection in the world to that, and should be prepared to support any measure for that purpose, but the House should remember that it will involve a very considerable cost because of the addition to the number of Judges. If the House is prepared to incur that cost, I should say that the same right of appeal should be given in criminal as in civil cases. But as soon as ever the Government shows a disposition to undertake a measure of this sort, we shall be involved in questions of economy. For these reasons I shall vote against the Amendment.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Perhaps I may be permitted to take a little interest in this subject by reason of the fact that I am probably the only Member of the House at this moment who is able to speak as a convicted criminal. And I should like to say that I think it would be a very good thing if all hon. Members could speak with the experience of convicted criminals—as persons who have passed the mill—because I entertain a very strong opinion that if hon. Members, especially those who sit

behind the Ministry and take an active part in the administration of rustic justice, had suffered the penalty they are constantly in the habit of inflicting, we should hear less than we do at present of "Justice's justice." I am not going to suggest that any sentences inflicted at Quarter Sessions, any more than those inflicted by the Judges of the land, must necessarily be harsh; but I am convinced that if Members who have to frame the law and to administer it when framed knew something by practical experience of the results of the penalties they inflict, they would be much more careful in their punishments than they are. The impression which has been conveyed to my mind by this debate is that while on the one side ample reason has been shown for a change in our present system, no cogent, convincing argument has been presented by a responsible Member of the Government against the proposed reform. The proposals are twofold. One is in the nature merely of a means to an end—namely, that a Royal Commission should issue for the purpose of investigating and taking evidence upon the whole subject. That proposal will certainly have my support unless some more expeditious method of dealing with the matter is proposed. The other proposal is that the Government in its responsible capacity should take the matter in hand with a view to the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal. The responsible Member of the Government in these affairs is the Home Secretary, but he meets us on both these points with a blank *non possumus*. He considers that a Royal Commission should not issue, because the facts are known and admitted, and, therefore, an inquiry would be useless. Nay, more than that, he says, or suggests, that a Royal Commission would diminish the responsibility of the present or any Government that might be called on to undertake a great reform which he seems to think would be desirable. With respect to the first argument, that the facts are known, the observations we have heard from the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Harrow Division (Mr. Ambrose) rather negative the assumption of the Home Secretary. The hon. Member, so far from regarding the facts as admitted, began by saying that there was no concensus of opinion in the House on the subject, and then went on to say that a Royal Commission, if issued, must review every sentence, and would have an endless and impossible task before it. Now, I am not of the same opinion as the hon. Member for the Harrow Division. It seems to me that it is clear that the Royal Commission would in no sense have to review sentences passed in individual cases, but, taking the particular proposition that the sentences imposed are irregular and uncertain and that too great a discretion is allowed to the Judges for the liberties and lives of our fellow citizens to be safe, it would be perfectly possible by an examination of records and criminal statistics to prove that some remedy is necessary. It is said that it is not necessary to have a Royal Commission to consider the irregularity and uncertainty of sentences, because crimes themselves are irregular and uncertain. But one case presented, I think, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton completely disposed of that aagument, because it was proved that you had one Judge in one district punishing a certain crime with two years' imprisonment and another Judge in another district punishing the same crime with twenty years' imprisonment. It seems to me that that entirely disposed of the somewhat airy arguments advanced in opposition to the view that sentences are irregular and uncertain. Then we are asked to believe that a Royal Commission would cast a slur upon the adminis-

tration of justice. I cannot conceive a more idle argument than that you are to refrain from investigating the question of the mal-administration of that part of the law upon which, more than upon any other, the happiness of the people depends, simply through fear of the susceptibilities of the Judges. If this argument is to be weight, it seems to me that we might as well at once shut our eyes and ears to all claims for the redress of grievances in this country. We are not complaining that the Judges of the country do their duty badly. I believe we may say that our Judges in this country are, as a rule, the highest class of officials in such a capacity that the civilized world can show. At any rate, I sincerely entertain that views The Judges themselves would, I am sure, welcome such an inquiry as is asked by the Motion, and would rejoice at the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal. The hon. Member who uses the argument that such a Court would be costly, mistakes the temper of Englishmen, if he thinks that a niggardly consideration of that sort would prevent them from taking steps to prevent injustice and judicial murders. The argument for such a Court is analogous to that so often urged for the existence of a Second Chamber. Judges, like others, are subject to panics, under the influence of which they give hasty decisions, and are tempted to impose unduly heavy sentences. By the time an appeal could be heard, in most cases, the panic would have subsided. The Trafalgar Square riot, on what is now known as Bloody Sunday, November 13, 1887, affords a good illustration of this. George Harrison was convicted of stabbing a policeman with an oyster knife on purely circumstantial evidence, and sentenced to five years' penal servitude, whilst the hon. Member for Lanarkshire (Mr. Cuninghame Graham) and his sturdy supporter, John Burns, only got six weeks' imprisonment, although, save for the oyster knife incident—which was supported by evidence on which one would not have hung a dog – theirs was precisely the same offence as Harrison's. The severity of the sentence on this man made so remarkable an impression on the working men of the Metropolis that they are supporting the unhappy man's wife and children by small subscriptions of a penny, sixpence, and so on. This case may be classed with those already quoted to the House, and will also serve to show the necessity for some system of reviewing the sentences passed by Judges in times of panic. You are not, I think, likely to further the ends of justice by allowing the public mind to become impressed with the belief that the sentences passed by Judges are unduly harsh and severe. In olden times juries have been known to forswear themselves rather than, for petty offences, condemn their fellow citizens to the gallows. I maintain, moreover, that irregularity and uncertainty in the matter of sentences produces contempt of the law on the part of the criminal classes. We have recently seen the spectacle of a number of noble Lords and others being arrested for gambling in gambling clubs. What has been the result of the prosecutions? Why, owing to an extraordinary condition of law, not one of the gentlemen found gambling has been punished—at any rate, to any appreciable degree—whereas the keepers of the clubs and the menials found in them have been subjected to heavy punishments. There is a decided irregularity observable in these cases. The gentlemen who were found gambling had broken the law —and broken it in what most people regard as a disgraceful manner. I suppose most honest people not afflicted with a passion for visiting Monte Carlo during the Christmas holidays, will recognize gambling as not only an offence technically against the law, but as carrying with it a moral stigma, otherwise I do not understand the *rationale* of a law which interferes with the pleasures of a noble Lord or anyone else. But we find that under British Law the offence of gambling is not punished in the case of those who ought to be held primarily responsible — namely, those who have committed the offence, but that secretaries, croupiers, and so on have inflicted upon them the same penalty which some of us on this side of the House have endured from calling

"Three cheers for the Plan of Campaign." I want hon. Gentlemen to understand what this means. If it does not display uncertainty and irregularity in the law, and if it is not calculated to produce contempt for the law, it passes my comprehension to know what is uncertainty and what is likely to produce contempt. Under the Coercion Act in Ireland there have been 23 convictions against hon. Members of this House, in consequence of which these Members have been subjected not only to the harsh discipline of the plank bed and the other indignities that common criminals have to endure, but to brutalities which are a disgrace to the country. Members have been tortured—as in the case of Mr. Carew, whose health has been nearly ruined—for technical crime, which no one outside the Tory Party looks upon as other than an honour and a glory to commit. These sentences are being inflicted not merely upon Leaders of the Irish Party, but since my own conviction there has been one miserable peasant sentenced to six months' imprisonment for the same offence—that of saying "Three cheers for the Plan of Campaign." Now I ask, where is the principle in a system of law which allows people to be sent to prison for six months for a technical offence of this kind, and yet allows a Magistrate to punish a man in England or Scotland with a month's imprisonment, or a paltry fine, for kicking his wife to death? You must strike at the root of this enormity. It is said "You cannot have a Court of Criminal Appeal." But there is a Court of Criminal Appeal in Ireland—a miserable one, certainly, especially when you consider that it sometimes increases sentences instead of reducing them. The Postmaster General told us that the Home Secretary is the very best Court of Appeal we could have, as he is not subject to outside pressure; but every one knows that whenever there is a conviction, as to the justice of which there is the least doubt, especially where the prisoner has been sentenced to death on circumstantial evidence, the greatest pressure is brought to bear on the Home Secretary to induce him to let the man off. I may quote one case which I think reflects credit on the action of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary. I allude to the case of the Jew, Lipski. There were many of us who thought he was innocent, and we used all the influence we could to induce the right hon. Gentleman to grant him a reprieve. So anxious was the right hon. Gentleman that there should be no mistake or miscarriage of justice that a reprieve was granted; although I am bound to add that we were at fault, and that the right hon. Gentleman was right in the conclusion he had at first come to, because Lipski, before he went to the scaffold, admitted that he was guilty. That is not the strongest case we can take, but it shows that the right hon. Gentleman in his official capacity, as a Court of Appeal in himself—if I may use such a phrase—is open to outside pressure, a fact which entirely destroys the argument of the Postmaster General as to not having a Court of Appeal. There are numerous cases in which strong proof has been forthcoming that innocent men have been kept in penal servitude for years—in one instance, the innocent person was thus detained for ten long years—and surely, if hon. Gentlemen could realize what it is to serve such a slavery as that of ten years' penal servitude, they and every other thinking man would unite in urging the necessity of establishing a Court of Appeal. I am sorry to say that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary used one argument that was hardly worthy of him. He spoke of the dramatic effect produced by the Judge in his red robes as a sufficient reason for not disturbing his decision by the action of a Court of Review, or Appeal. But here, again, the fact that the right hon. Gentleman is himself a Court of Appeal cuts the ground from under him, because it is well known that cases of murder are liable to be brought up for revision by the Home Secretary. Are we, then, as a sensible body of men, forming part of the Legislature of the country, prepared to admit that there is any force in the argument that a red-robed Judge constitutes a spectacle producing such an effect as is likely to deter persons from committing future offences, and that if he is conscious that his decision may be reversed by a Court of Appeal, he will, therefore, be invested with less dignity? No one can go to an Assize town and

see all the ridiculous flummery attendant on the passing of the Judges from their Chambers to the Assize Courts, accompanied by their javelin-men, and heralded by trumpeters making the most hideous and discordant noises, without becoming aware of the farce to which the whole system would be reduced if it is only looked at from the dramatic effect point of view. For Heaven's sake let us get rid of these absurdities before we talk of insisting of maintaining the dignity of our Criminal Law system! The arguments we have heard from the other side of the House, so far as they have been directed against the Resolution of my hon. and learned Friend, are, in reality, not worthy of serious attention on the part of this House. Therefore, without going into them, I will only say in conclusion, that I thank the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary for what he said when he spoke in sympathetic tones of the poor wretches who spend their lives in penal servitude as an expiation for petty crime. It is well known that there are many so-called criminals who, merely by the state of hopeless misery in which they are plunged, commit the crimes for which they are sentenced in order to obtain the shelter, clothing, food, and warmth which are obtainable in our gaols. It must, indeed, be recognized that in this country poverty is a crime—although, perhaps, the same thing may be said of too many other places—but, whatever you may do in the way of establishing a Court of Appeal, or otherwise altering the English system of criminal jurisprudence, you will never truly solve this great and important question until you take that much wider subject—the condition of the people—into due consideration, with the view of seeing how far you can get rid of the terrible misery which, here and elsewhere, is the most prolific parent of crime.

*Mr. MILVAIN (Durham): With regard to the Resolution of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, I believe it would be absolutely impossible to draw up a Code that would make sentences equally applicable to all classes of criminals, no matter what the offences may be. This is a matter which must very largely be left to the experience and discretion of the Judge who tries the case, and that may be the reason why, he has a discretion varying in misdemeanour and a great number of felonies, between short terms of imprisonment or mere sureties of peace, to penal servitude of greater or less duration. A Judge—with the critical eye and experience belonging to every Judge on the English Bench—ought to be able to take in at a glance, independently of all the circumstances, what is the physique of the prisoner, so that he may properly adjust the amount of punishment to be endured. The Judge ought also to be able to make this general distinction in the sentences he passes—that each sentence shall be such as to induce sympathy with the law, instead of sympathy with the prisoner. For my part, speaking of the administration of justice in this country, I am prepared to maintain that public sympathy is almost invariably with the law, and very seldom, if ever, with the criminal. The fact impresses upon me the conviction that the public have full confidence in the administration of justice. I now turn to the question, What course would be taken if a Royal Commission were appointed? Would you have the Judges brought before the Commission to answer questions as to the reasons which influenced their minds when they passed this or that sentence in this or that particular case? Or would you have all the witnesses whose evidence had been given at the trial of certain cases called before the Commissioners so that the latter might determine as to the circumstances under what particular punishments were inflicted? Or would you go to the extent of calling the criminals themselves, so that the Commissioners might judge of their physique and nervous temperament? To my mind it would be absolutely ridiculous and absurd to expect a definite

conclusion as to anything like equality in the sentences passed on prisoners. Of course, there have been cases—and I am glad there are so few—in which there has been miscarriage of justice, and it has been suggested that the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal would be the proper mode of meeting such cases. The Edlingham burglary case has been quoted as an instance and used as an argument in favour of such a Court of Criminal Appeal. But what would have happened if that case had been heard in such a Court? The criminals would be arraigned before the Court, and their own testimony would not be admissible. The same witnesses would be examined against them, their conviction would have been affirmed, and they would still have been suffering the punishment to which, if they had been guilty, they were very properly sentenced. In my opinion, the Home Secretary is a more satisfactory tribunal of inquiry. He is not bound by the technicalities of the laws of evidence, but inquires into all the circumstances, and upon them determines whether the conviction or sentence is satisfactory. If the Edlingham burglary case is quoted as a reason why a Court of Appeal should be created, I would quote it as a reason why it should not be created. In looking for a remedy for cases of this nature, I cannot but think that the Home Secretary is the best tribunal; and I would suggest that his jurisdiction might be enlarged and strengthened to this extent: that where any case arose in which grave doubts were entertained as to the propriety of the conviction and the consequent sentence, the Home Secretary, upon good cause being shown that there ought to be further inquiry, might be empowered to grant such an inquiry, the Commissioner whom he might appoint to conduct it being authorized to administer the oath and take such evidence as might be forthcoming. I cannot but think that if the present discretionary power of the Home Secretary were so strengthened you would be enabled, in this way, to meet all the evils and get rid of all the difficulties which have been brought before the House, on the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Bethnal Green.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, North West): I had not intended to have spoken in this debate, and I am fully aware of the difficulty in which any Member is placed who offers to stand between the House of Commons and a Division at a quarter to one o'clock. I have, however, been prompted to rise by a sense of duty, and I only intervene in consequence of some remarks that have fallen from the hon. Member for Camborne (Mr. Conybeare.) In supporting the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Bethnal Green the hon. Gentleman brought before the House the case of George Harrison, who was sentenced to five years' penal servitude for an occurrence a year and a-half ago. I am not now going to rake up the old story. I hope that the feeling which existed in this House at that time has subsided, and that the House is now content to let bygones be bygones and to argue the question on its merits. That case, in my opinion, presents the most cogent and forcible argument in favour of the creation of a Court of Criminal Appeal, this man, George Harrison, having been sentenced on such evidence as you have heard from the hon. Member for Camborne, during a period of great public excitement. I think that every Member of every section on both sides of this House will agree with me when I say that had the case of that man, based on the evidence which was then brought forward, been presented before a Judge of this country at the present moment the result would have been a very different one. I want to ask every Member of this House to try and realize what a sentence of five years' penal servitude is to a working man in receipt of 18s. or 19s. a week. I want to try and emphasize the state of things that must happen when such a man, who at least is the bread-winner for his wife and family, is in prison. I do think that it is not a matter for congratu-

lation that the responsibility of such a sentence should rest finally, as it must rest in the present state of the law, upon the head of the Home Secretary. I know that most probably the Home Secretary would, if it were possible to do so, mitigate the sentences of these men. But it is impossible for him, holding the position that he does hold, to express an opinion against the opinions expressed by the Judges of the land. I do think that if the hon. Member for Bethnal Green had searched the criminal jurisprudence of this country from one end to the other, he could not have found one argument of greater force than this case of George Harrison, whose sentence was inflicted with circumstances in view that were in no wise brought about by himself, and whose sentence should speedily be reversed.

*Mr. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): I cannot allow the debate to conclude without entering my protest against the description which has been given of the evidence against Harrison.

Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I think the right hon. Gentleman will allow that the policeman for whom this man was sentenced was not off duty more than three or four days. Therefore he could not have received any serious personal injury.

*Mr. WORTLEY: The question is, whether the description given of the evidence by the hon. Member for Camborne was a correct description. He said that no witness saw the blow inflicted for which Harrison was convicted. That is not the case. He was seen to go through the motion of stabbing and to throw away a weapon; and the weapon was immediately afterwards found close at hand.

Mr. CONYBEARE: With reference to that point——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*Mr. WORTLEY: We cannot re-try the case. I merely wish to enter my word of protest against the exceedingly inaccurate description of the case.

Mr. Cuninghame Grahame

Mr. CONYBEARE: I deny it.

*Mr. WORTLEY: In view of the most minute and laborious examination of the circumstances of the case which was made by the Home Secretary, I believe a sound conclusion was arrived at. On the general question, I would ask the House to remember that in the few recent instances in which the House has been asked to limit the discretion of the Judges, it has steadily refused to do so. Only the other day it extended the discretion of the Judges by accepting the Second Reading of the Bill with regard to corporal punishment, and two years ago it refused to adopt a minimum for sentences in case of armed burglary. I submit that recent instances show that the general tendency of modern feeling is to preserve the system which prevails of giving the widest possible discretion to the judiciary by imposing the maximum limits of punishment and not attempting to draw anything like a minimum line.

The House divided:—Ayes, 122 Noes, 53.—(Div. List, No. 126.)

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question proposed, "That Mr Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Supply—Committee upon Monday next.

It being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House Adjourned at One o'clock till Monday next.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 10.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [JUNE 4.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 27th May, 1889.

INTERPRETATION BILL. (NO. 92.)

A Bill for consolidating enactments relating to the construction of Acts of Parliament, and for further shortening the language used in Acts of Parliament—Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed.

WALTHAM ABBEY GUNPOWDER FACTORY BILL. (No. 65.)

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed for to-morrow.

OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS AND OFFICE OF THE GENTLEMAN USHER OF THE BLACK ROD.

First Report from the Select Committee, considered.

THE EARL OF MORLEY: My Lords, in moving that your Lordships should agree to the first Report from the Select Committee on the Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and the Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, it may be convenient to your Lordships that I should inform the House of the decisions which have been arrived at by the Committee. It was decided that if any noble Lord shall, at the commencement of the Session or at any other time, desire to have all the Papers printed supplied to him, he can obtain them on application at the Paper Office; but if no such applications are made, the Papers that will be received in the ordinary course will be the proceedings of the House, Reports of Select Committees and Commissions, without the evidence, Bills, and proposed Amendments, and all Papers laid before the House. To enable noble Lords to obtain any Papers they may want, and in order that your Lordships may know what Papers are printed, it has been determined that at certain periods classified lists shall be printed and circulated.

Report agreed to.

THE MUSEUM OF NAVAL ARCHITECTURE.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF RAVENSWORTH asked Her Majesty's Government whether it was any portion of the instruction to the recently appointed Treasury Committee on the Science Collections at the South Kensington Museum to disperse, remove, or in any way reduce the collection illustrative of "Naval Architecture"; and whether, if the Committee report in favour of such a course, an opportunity would be given to Parliament of expressing its opinion before any action is taken in the matter?

*VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: My Lords, the question which the noble Lord has placed on the Paper is much in the form of one asked by him about two years ago. There is no doubt that the subject is an important one, and that great interest is felt in this collection of naval models. It is a remarkably curious and exceedingly valuable one. I can only say with respect to the question of removal, that there is a Departmental Committee appointed for the purpose of inquiry into the science collections at South Kensington, though not with any special reference to the Naval Museum. No intimation has been received by me of any intention to remove the collection. The Departmental Committee is now inquiring into the question of the science collection altogether, but not specially

with reference to the collection of naval models. I can promise my noble Friend that no removal will take place without Parliament having an opportunity to discuss the matter.

INDECENT ADVERTISEMENTS BILL.
(No. 34.)

Amendments reported (according to order); further Amendments made; and Bill to be read 3ª to-morrow.

NAVAL DEFENCE BILL. (No. 80.)

*THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (the Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, I have now to move the Second Reading of the Naval Defence Bill. The Bill has been before the public for some time, and I imagine that its provisions and the purposes with which it has been brought forward are familiar to your Lordships. Still, I think it would not be respectful if I did not indicate what is the nature of the provisions, in some respects unusual, and, I think, important, which we have presented to Parliament, and what are the considerations which have induced us to submit them. It is proposed to apply the sum of 21½ millions to strengthening the Navy. Ten millions of it will be applied to ships to be built by contract by private builders; 11½ millions will be applied to ships to be built in Her Majesty's Dockyards; and they will be built within four and a half years. Of that sum we take it that three-quarters is for hulls and machinery and one quarter for armament. It has been said that it is a mistake to represent this sum of 21½ millions as being entirely an extraordinary effort to provide for the naval defence of our trade and of the kingdom, because, although the ten millions which are to be paid to contractors will be undoubtedly an extraordinary expense, the rest will be borne on the ordinary Estimates of the year, and may be spoken of as ordinary expenditure. That, however, my Lords, is a fallacy. The 11½ millions which will be expended in Her Majesty's Dockyards will be borne on the Naval Estimates of the year, but is very much in excess of that which can be called ordinary expenditure. Of course, the term ordinary expenditure is a very vague one, because the meaning entirely depends on the period of time that you select as your normal point—as the *datum* point from which the expenditure is to be measured. I do not wish to discuss what has been done by noble Lords opposite, but if I may take Lord Beaconsfield's Administration as a period of normal Naval Estimates the case would then stand thus:—In the four years ending in 1879 our expenditure on new naval construction was two millions a year. In the four years which ended with the present year—a portion of which is no doubt due to the arrangements of my noble Friend above the Gangway—our naval expenditure on new construction has been £3,100,000. In the four years that will end in 1893 the naval expenditure on the Estimates for new construction will be £4,200,000. So that, taking Lord Beaconsfield's Administration as the normal expenditure by which to measure the Estimates, there is an excess for each year of the four or five years that are coming of £2,200,000, very nearly making up the 11½ millions which, as I have said, we intend to spend in Her Majesty's Dockyards. Some noble Lords present will, of course, think that we ought not to have spent so much. I am not entering into the merits or demerits of the expenditure now, but merely putting the matter upon its proper footing—namely, that it is an extra expenditure of 11½ millions upon the Navy. The present Board of Admiralty have made considerable changes in the traditional practice with respect to the allocation of expenditure. It was the old practice of all Boards of Admiralty to begin a great deal more work than they had any chance of finishing in a short time, and to go on with a great many jobs in hand and to take a considerable time in finishing each job. The policy of the present Board of Admiralty has been to finish every bit of work as fast as they could before beginning any new work. The importance of that arrangement is that they are able to foresee with more accuracy what their expenditure at all times will be and to keep up a regular rate of expenditure. That means a regular rate of labour and so to employ the same number of men without sudden changes in the way of reduction or increase of the establishment. But the habit of doing a good many things at one time and not finishing them has been largely produced

by certain Treasury arrangements—arrangements which I have no doubt were originally very valuable to the finance of the country, but which have not had an advantageous effect upon the shipbuilding of the Navy. The Treasury arrangement is to estimate how much of a ship will be built in a particular year; and if a less sum was then spent on it, the money had to be returned to the Treasury; if more, a Supplementary Estimate had to be asked for. The result has been that there has been an artificial adaptation of the structure of the ship in order to suit the financial exigencies of the calculations that have been made; so that, if possible, there should be spent on the ships so much in the financial year as was intended, and no more. The necessary consequence has been that the arrangements have been artificial, and from time to time it has been necessary sometimes to discharge men because they had not enough money, and at other times to take on more men because they had more money than the existing establishment could get through in the financial year. In this matter we have most undoubtedly made a new departure. We have abandoned the practice of calculating the building of ships by bits. Besides the inconvenience it has caused, I think it has had a bad effect in relation to political influences. When the year comes round again the plans for building ships come under consideration, perhaps before a new First Lord of the Admiralty, perhaps before a new Chancellor of the Exchequer, and under changed conditions, under circumstances when there might be a desire to save money or possibly there might be a panic; and the result has been a stretching and a contracting, as it were, of the plan of a ship, with a perpetual liability to alteration, which has produced some of the strange anomalies that have been brought before our attention in recent discussions. We desire when a ship is once begun on a given plan that she shall be pushed through as fast as the establishment at our command will enable us, with regularity, without unnecessary intermission, and without any alterations, either financial or otherwise. Therefore the ships to be provided by the money that is now to be placed by Parliament at the disposal of the Government will be begun and carried through within a given time and without further reference to Parliament; and without an Act of Parliament it will not be in the power of a future First Lord or Chancellor of the Exchequer to alter the plan now adopted. The next point I have to show your Lordships is what addition to the Navy this expenditure will produce. It is on the whole 70 ships, 38 of which will be built in Her Majesty's Dockyards and 32 by contract. Those ships are thus distributed: Of the Dockyard ships 14 will be battle-ships, 20 will be protected cruisers, and four will be smaller ships; of the contract vessels four will be battle-ships, 22 protected cruisers, and six will be smaller ships. Taking into account the ships we build this year, we should be in 1894 stronger than we are now by 113 ships. That increase is specially directed towards the increase of our cruisers, in which we found there was a deficiency, for whereas we increase our battle-ships from 50 to 65, we increase our protected and armoured cruisers from 40 to 100. The most interesting point, however, is, What is the relation of the Fleet we hope to have in 1894 to the Fleets of other Powers? It has been laid down as a sort of general rule or maxim for the guidance of this country as a great maritime nation that we ought always to have at our command a Fleet which would be equal to a combination of any two great Powers which might be brought against us. I think, on the whole, this ideal state will have been reached in 1894. In that year the armoured battle-ships of England will be 77, those of France 48, of Germany 40, of Russia 27, and of Italy 19. If Germany and France were to unite against us—I do not think the combination is a probable one—they could bring only 88 armoured ships against our 77. If your Lordships examine the details of the ships you will find a considerable number both in Germany and France put down as armoured battle-ships which are really very small vessels only armed for coast defence. But in any other combination, such as that of France and Russia, France and Italy, Germany and Italy, or Russia and Italy—in all these cases our armoured battle-ships would be more numerous than the armoured battle-ships of any two Powers combined. In respect of protected cruisers we shall

be still stronger. There is a technical distinction between protected and armoured ships—in the former the protection is applied only to the vital parts of a ship. The protected cruisers of England will in 1894 be 88, those of France 14, Germany 10, Italy 17, and Russia 3, making a total of 44. So England will have precisely twice as many as the other four Powers altogether. That, my Lords, so far as numbers go, appears to me, as far as we can make any calculation, to indicate a satisfactory state of things. I am aware that there are naval critics who will not be satisfied with this provision, and who think that we have fallen short in our efforts to provide for the defence of the country. I have seen such views maintained by distinguished men in published articles. Well, it is very difficult to bring these views to the test. I see that a very distinguished Admiral has maintained that we ought to have an addition of 240 cruisers to our existing numbers if we are to defend our trade in all parts of the world. It is quite impossible to bring such arguments to an actual test, but there is one consideration that critics of this kind entirely lose sight of. They forget the enormous change in this particular branch of naval warfare which has been introduced by the necessity which every cruiser is under of coming back for coal after being a certain number of days at sea. Fighting between fleets has not changed much, except in respect of their armament and armour, but the part of naval warfare that consists of preying upon trade has undergone an entire revolution, for whereas in former days the privateer or cruiser could remain at sea as long as she had got food, now she is entirely limited by her distance from her base of coal supply, and she must return to it under pain of being found helpless and therefore defenceless by the enemy. I believe the average coaling capacity of our ships, cruisers, and battle-ships averages a little under 18 days. I am told on good authority that foreign navies are still worse provided, and may be taken as having one-third less coal capacity than our ships have. That would make their limit 12 days. A day at ten knots an hour is four degrees; so, roughly, we may say that considerably less than 1,500 miles would be the limit of the striking distance of a cruiser from her base of supply, it being borne in mind that she has to go back again to renew her supply. The peculiar circumstance which we must steadily keep in view, and which must have great effect in any future war, is that our own war-vessels and most of the commerce of the world now depends upon British coaling stations. Of course there are others, but foreign stations are limited in number, and therefore could be watched with comparative ease by a Power having command of the sea. Therefore the danger for our distant trade—for our trade in the Pacific, north and south—is much less, comparatively, under the new system of warfare than it was under the old. Of course, if we are the Power which has command of the sea, I think the idea that we should expend such vast sums as those indicated in the Estimates I have referred to in the defence of our distant trade has been adopted without sufficiently weighing the revolution that has taken place in the conditions of warfare. Before you decide that any particular part of the world can be exposed to the depredations of a hostile cruiser, you must ask what base belonging to her own nation that hostile cruiser can go to for coal, and whether that base is within striking distance. That is my reply to those who, on the ground of the enormously extended trade of Great Britain in every part of the world, claim from us such extravagant efforts as those to which I have referred. I freely admit, however, in respect of all other matters, that while there is much that is obscure, doubtful, and uncertain, the progress of science has greatly increased the necessity for effort and caution on the part of this country. It may be asked—and probably will be asked by noble Lords opposite—why have you not taken these steps before? My first reply is that the arrears in the supply of our ordnance has made it absolutely impossible. We have—I will not say an unlimited power of building ships—but we have a power of building ships of which we have not reached the limit; but we have long ago reached the limit of our power of constructing ordnance. It is a matter of notoriety that we have for years been in arrear and unable to furnish ships with the large ordnance necessary for their efficiency. Until we could make up those arrears and were

able to furnish ordnance to all our ships, it was idle to think of making any large increase in our Navy. The establishments that can furnish large guns are very limited in number; you cannot go beyond their resources; there are no other resources on which you can fall back; and it was an absolute impossibility, once ships had been allowed to get ahead of ordnance, to increase the Navy until you restored the equilibrium between the new ships to be built and the ordnance they required. I do not care to examine what politicians or which Party may have been to blame for this disproportion; probably the blame, if blame there was, must be spread over a great number of people. But when people are severe upon us politicians, I wish to point out that a special responsibility rests upon one class of persons, and these are our friends the experts. If there is any cause that has delayed the supply of ordnance and has produced this arrear, it is the length of time we adhered to the muzzle-loading gun after every other nation had abandoned it. The persistence in that prejudice has thrown us seriously into arrear and has lost us several precious years; and it was to the experts, and to the experts alone, that that persistence was due. I do not say all experts were to blame; but in this matter the delay is due to experts and not to politicians. My Lords, that is one reason why we have not made these propositions earlier. Another reason—and I hope I shall not be blamed for it—is our utter dislike and reluctance to incur the expenditure involved. We have put it off as long as we thought it safe, until we were convinced by the accumulation of proofs that we should no longer be doing our duty if we did not make these propositions, onerous as they may be. It must be remembered that we have had some light thrown upon our capacity for defence by the Naval Manœuvres which have been established in recent times. I am not competent to discuss their lessons in detail, but I think one fact that came out plainly was that a system of blockade is not a system upon which we can rely. When, instead of blockading ships in places where they are assembled, you have to pursue them across the ocean, it requires no technical knowledge to see that a great many more ships are required; and the fact that our ports would be exposed to insult, our trade routes would be imperilled, and our commerce exposed to depredation by cruisers whose action we could not check unless we had an adequate number of cruisers to send after them, proves the necessity of immediately providing ourselves with the requisite protection. Then there is the question of invasion. That is a question which it is difficult to deal with fully in this House, but it has already been discussed by some distinguished men, and Lord Wolseley has expressed his opinion that under present circumstances 100,000 men might be landed on our coasts in a single night. Upon this point some difference of military opinion does, however, exist, and in this conflict of expert opinion, civilians must form opinions of their own. My opinion, I may say, remains unchanged, that this is not a danger which we need consider. But I have found that great authorities do entertain the idea that a small invasion is not beyond the limits of probability, but this would be an invasion by a much smaller force and which would be in the nature of a forlorn hope with which our military resources, if properly ordered, could well deal. But the subject of sudden invasion is not what I am thinking of. I find that many of the highest authorities consider that if our possession of the Channel was destroyed by a naval disaster or defeat even for a short time, then the possibility of invasion would become a real danger. It is impossible to say what the issue of the first naval collision might be, for it necessarily is a matter of speculation. These vast machines which we have constructed at such immense expense have practically never been tried. There are people who think they are too delicate for the rough requirements of war. We cannot form any certain forecast from experience of what their behaviour or fate will be when the contest occurs. It is, of course, only with extreme reluctance that we contemplate the possibility that we shall come off worst in the first naval encounter, but we ought to be prepared for such a possibility, and the only provision against the danger that would ensue in such an eventuality is to have a large reserve. Without it we should have nothing to defend ourselves. If

we have a large reserve at our command we can then look without dismay to the chances of war, because we know that we can supply the place of any vessels we may lose. If you stake your command of the Channel on the result of one engagement or a succession of operations you will be placing in danger interests so vast that it is terrible to think of them, and you may encounter calamities which generations might not undo. My Lords, it may be said that such speculations as these are made only by alarmists, and that they ought not to be made. This is a kind of criticism which is very safe, because, as your Lordships know very well, it would be impossible for me or for you to discuss in detail the elements of safety or of danger, which in the present state of the political world may exist or present themselves. All that we can safely say is that questions which may bring nations at issue still exist, that there are territories coveted and not possessed, that there are past wounds not yet healed, and above all that, however earnest may be the resolution of the existing rulers of Europe to avoid war, and I believe it is universal and genuine, there never was a time when one could assume with less certainty that the rulers of five years hence will be the same as the rulers of to-day. And another matter that must be borne in mind is the extreme facility of concentration, which forms one great element of danger. Science has done much for the massing of armed men; and all the refined and subtle machinery of war which a nation may possess may now be concentrated and directed at the bidding of a single will upon a single point in an incredibly short space of time. This is a vital distinction between war at the present time and in the past. When the danger comes it will come upon us as a thief in the night, and give us little time to prepare to ward off that danger. But perhaps the best answer to be made to those who say this is an alarmist view is not to point to proofs but to call witnesses. What are the other nations of Europe doing? Is there one of them that is not accumulating means of offence and defence beyond all former practice and experience? Every one of them is doing this at the greatest possible sacrifice, and there is not one of them where the financial effort is not felt with bitter intensity by large masses of their populations. The fiscal burden upon the masses of the population in some of them is indeed becoming so severe that there are some persons who think that the severity of this burden is one of the causes of danger, and that men may be tempted to court a crisis which will in one way or the other deliver them from it. Everywhere armies are being increased, more ships are being built, larger sums are being lavished, new harbours are being constructed, and new armaments are being called into existence with feverish haste. Do not tell me that the experienced men under whose direction these things are being done, who have lived far more in the face of danger than ever we have done, and who have before them all the sources of information that we have, are making these gigantic efforts without being convinced that there is a real possibility of the dangers that they are struggling to avert. My Lords, I know it is said that by our action we are actually causing these great armaments and nourishing this insecure feeling. If ever there was an argument which realized the fable of the wolf and the lamb it is this one. We have drunk of the stream at a point far below that at which they have touched it. We have waited until the last hour—it may be beyond the last hour—rather than join in the general race of expenditure and preparation for the sake of avoiding to the utmost of our power any encouragement of others in a course the effect of which is so terribly injurious to mankind. But we dare not delay any longer. Do not say that I am preaching the immediate or probable existence of danger. I am not pointing out that there is any probability of the evils against which I ask you to guard. When a man insures his life or his house it is not because he expects that he will die immediately, or that his house will assuredly catch fire, but that there is a chance that these things may happen, and against that chance he accordingly provides. Do not interpret my words to bear a more extended meaning. I say there is a real and genuine risk. I hope earnestly and believe this risk never may develop into a reality, but there is a risk against which you are bound to guard, and we are confident that we have not appealed and shall not now appeal in

vain to the patriotism of Parliament, in urging them to take care by such precautions as they can make that that risk shall not be turned into a reality for us. My Lords, I move the Second Reading of the Bill.

EARL GRANVILLE: I do not consider it necessary for me to follow the noble Marquess into the details which I am bound to say he has very clearly explained to the House. But I should be unwilling to allow this Bill to pass without saying a few words. I do not oppose it, but I do not think it is a Bill which should pass this House in silence. The Bill comes to this House backed with the approval of a large majority of the House of Commons, which is the special guardian of the public purse. And more than that, although there may be a difference in the application of the principle, both parties are agreed in wishing to see our Navy adequate for national defence. The noble Marquess mentioned as a recommendation of the present scheme that it proposes to spend double the amount spent in the time of Lord Beaconsfield. I quite admit that is so, but I cannot say that is any very great recommendation. On the question of expenditure, if not for the best of all possible objects, I think it desirable not entirely to discard the opinions which have been laid down, not only by Liberal Leaders, but also by such statesmen as Sir Robert Peel and Lord Beaconsfield. Sir Robert Peel particularly repudiated the advantage to the country of greatly increasing its naval and military operations in order that it might reign supreme, because, he said, the result of that would be that other countries would follow that example, and the result would be that each country would spend enormous resources merely in the fear of military operations. Lord Beaconsfield on one occasion almost prayed the House of Commons in the interests of peace to diminish rather than to increase expenditure of this kind. Now, the noble Marquess has stated what will be the result of this scheme. He says that in 1894 the Navy will be equal to the navies of any two combined countries. This statement would have been more reassuring if a similar statement had not been made some time before. The Government, when they came into office, I think for two years in succession made a reduction in the expenditure on the Navy. The noble Marquess shakes his head.

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Not a reduction in naval construction.

EARL GRANVILLE: The reduction was in the Navy Estimates.

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Yes, but not in the Naval Construction Department.

EARL GRANVILLE: I hardly see how a reduction in the Estimates can be inconsistent with a reduction in construction. The Government stated at that time that our Navy was equal to the navies of any other two countries in the world. The noble Marquess now prophesies exactly the same thing for 1894. But the fact of that statement having been made at that time diminishes the confidence to be placed in assurances of this character. The Government also stated at that time, in the most positive way, that it was very unwise to lay down many ships at once, for the somewhat obvious reason that in 10 or 15 years they would become obsolete. I am not very much reassured on this point by the declarations of the noble Marquess, because one of the reasons which he gave for the great constitutional innovation, without precedent, as to the mode of paying this expenditure, was that the Admiralty were apt to change the design of their ships and to admit what they thought were improvements. It appears to me that there is no such great danger as that which has been stated. My Lords, the noble Marquess has thought it right at this stage of the Bill—a Bill which is certain to pass—to raise an alarm. He made certain statements which I defy anyone to say were not of a most alarming character It is quite true that in the last sentence or two of his speech the noble Marquess rather answered himself; but it is impossible to place faith in the picture of the danger which, he says, in a very short time we may be liable to. I am not over-sanguine when I say that this picture is overdrawn. I am quite sure that we ought to do all that is necessary to make the Navy adequate; but to base it upon fears which, I believe, are very largely exaggerated, if not chimerical, is not wise nor prudent. The noble Marquess has made very little defence for the perfectly new and unprecedented course of meeting the naval expenditure adopted by the Government, and of

taking it away from the control of Parliament. It does not, however, really take the matter away from the control of Parliament, because there is the possibility of another Government coming into power, and if they were to have a large majority at their back the House of Commons might of course repeal and alter the Bill now before us. In that case it is worth while your Lordships' considering whether this House would not be placed in a false position. I do not wish to go into details, and I have no intention to vote against the Second Reading of the Bill.

*THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: My Lords, in saying a few words upon this subject I think that, in the first place, I may congratulate your Lordships that a legitimate opportunity has been afforded to this House for discussing the naval programme for the next five years. Such opportunities have rarely on former occasions been given to the House of Lords. And I think I may say, without any risk of stating what is not the truth, that it is an advantage to the country that your Lordships' House should have the opportunity of discussing the programme of naval defence. At the present time there are two Members of this House who have held the position of First Lord of the Admiralty. My noble Friend, Lord Brassey, has been Secretary to the Admiralty, and we have two professional officers of Her Majesty's Navy who have had greater experience than any Member of the other House—Lord Clanwilliam and Lord Alcester. We have also Lord Ravensworth, who is Chairman of the Society of Naval Architects. Therefore it does seem to me that it is to the advantage of the country that the strength of the Navy should be discussed in the House of Lords. It is, I think, very essential that your Lordships should understand that this sum of £21,500,000 which is comprised in the Bill is not in addition to shipbuilding votes, but is the whole shipbuilding expenditure for five years, so that it cannot be set down as being a very enormous increase of expenditure. At the beginning of next year almost every one of the ships now on the stocks will be completed; and in the spring of next year the whole of the former programme will be finished. A new programme must therefore necessarily be prepared and carried out. I confess it appears to me that the amount asked for by the Admiralty is not an unreasonable amount in itself and is not more than adequate for the demands of the service. I wish to call your Lordships' attention to the report of three officers of the Navy upon the general results of the Naval Manœuvres of last year. The officers, than whom I am convinced no men could be found in the service more qualified, are Sir William Dowell, Sir R. V. Hamilton, and Sir F. Richards. This was their opinion given after careful consideration of the results of the Naval Manœuvres. They say:—

"The main lesson that these manœuvres emphasize is that Great Britain, whose maritime supremacy is her life, is very far from being as strong as she should be on the seas."

And they observed, and this point I wish to draw to your Lordships' particular attention,

"No fresh ironclads appear to have been laid down since 1886."

I do not think any had been laid down since 1885, but we will say 1886,

"and as there is nothing, in our opinion, to justify the belief that the days of ironclad battle-ships are over, we recommend a resumption of, and a steady continuance of, ironclad building."

My Lords, I can well understand the reason which induced the First Lord of the Admiralty not to lay down any of these ships between 1885 and the present time. It has been a matter of considerable doubt whether, in consequence of the use of the torpedo, the large battle-ship would not become a weapon of the past, and for a time some nations did not continue to build ships of that class; but the general opinion of experts at the present time is that the days of battle-ships are not past, and therefore it is necessary for us to progress with the times in order to maintain our naval supremacy. I do not think the number of battle-ships proposed to be built is excessive. The ships to be laid down between the years 1885 and 1890, is 10, which is the same as the number laid down between the years 1881 and 1885. No one can dispute the necessity for increasing the number of cruisers required for the protection of our trade, and, while I do not think the Government have made an unreasonable demand in this respect, I consider that they have asked for an addition to the Navy which is fully

adequate to the requirements of the case. With respect to the quality of the ships proposed to be added to the Navy, I should not for a moment venture to put forward my own opinion; but on reading the Papers presented to Parliament I find that the officers whom the First Lord of the Admiralty has consulted on the designs of the vessels are men who may fully receive your Lordships' confidence. I believe there is no more practical man in the service than Admiral Hopkins, the present Controller of the Navy, nor any man in whom the naval profession have greater confidence. My noble Friend the First Lord has also consulted other naval officers of the highest reputation; and the principal design of the new battle-ships was recently most exhaustively discussed at a meeting of the Society of Naval Architects. The objections raised to the design were, I believe, answered conclusively in the opinion of those present, and on that occasion the design received the approval of several very distinguished naval officers. Admiral Sir Houston Stewart, who was at one time for five or six years Controller of the Navy, thought it his duty to express an opinion publicly in respect to the designs of these ships, and said they were the best ideals of powerful battle-ships ever yet produced. I state this because it will give your Lordships some confidence in the programme of the Admiralty. Admiral Sir Houston Stewart added:—

"Being now a retired old Admiral I can only judge by what I hear around me, and certainly it appears to me that there never was a time, certainly never while I was on active service, in which the Admiralty, as now represented at Whitehall, possessed in so large a measure the general confidence of the Navy, both in the performance of its administrative and its constructive functions."

My Lords, I think such a testimony coming from a naval officer of Sir Houston Stewart's reputation must be very gratifying to my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty, and must give your Lordships confidence with respect to the quality of the ships to be produced. Now, my Lords, I should like to say a few words in regard to procedure. No doubt the form of procedure laid down in this Bill is novel, but it has been accepted by the other House of Parliament, and I do not see what control of finance is taken from the other House. The whole of the Dockyard expenditure must be paid out of the moneys voted by the House of Commons. All that is done is to authorize £10,000,000 to be spent in building ships by contract, and for all practical purposes there is no difference between putting that into an Act of Parliament and making the contracts in one year, because, when contracts have once been made, it is impossible to repudiate them. Thus, in the winter 1884-5, it was my duty to make contracts for something like £3,000,000 for shipbuilding, and my successor was obliged to complete those contracts; so that, during the years that those contracts were going on, they had to make that expenditure. Apart from the question of contracts, I hold that this Bill contains a change of great importance, both in regard to efficiency and economy. I am the last man to say anything against full control being exercised over expenditure by the Treasury or the Audit Office, but the practice pursued in the matter of naval construction has occasioned difficulties and caused an unnecessary expenditure of money. Sir James Graham, when First Lord of the Admiralty, made certain alterations with regard to the Estimates which provided that all balances at the end of the year were to be handed back to the Exchequer. It was found that certain things were being done with the balances from year to year without the cognizance of Parliament, and at that time a change was necessary. But in respect to ship-building, when we had to deal with great firms for the manufacture of our engines, for the manufacture of iron plates, and all the material required for a ship, and where the supplies are of a nature that they cannot—however they may desire to do so—help being delayed, it becomes a serious matter if balances have to be handed back in that way. Again, where we had to deal with firms of ship-builders whose work may be delayed by a variety of causes, which may interfere with the carrying out of contracts, it became to those administering the Admiralty a matter of great inconvenience if they found themselves bound, on the 31st of March in each financial year, to hand back to the Exchequer sums of money voted by Parliament for the Services of the year, and which the

Admiralty had every reason to suppose would be spent in the course of that year, but which, owing to some accident, could not be paid until a few months after the close of the year. To insist upon carrying out the principle of the surrender of balances to the Exchequer might be called the pedantry of finance rather than an adherence to the real principles of financial control and financial examination. The present measure contains in its clauses a complete remedy against that evil. As to whether this is or is not a bad precedent, all I can say is that, as far as I can understand, those changes could not be made without the sanction of Parliament, and I think it is an excellent precedent that this reform should be made in the administration of naval expenditure. Now I hardly like to allude to it, but still I think I must allude to one observation which was made by the Prime Minister, who I do not think quite appreciates the precise difficulty which has occurred with regard to the completion of ships. The Prime Minister, in referring to the question of the completion of ships, said it should be the object of the Admiralty to get the ships completed as fast as they could. The reason why the ships of late years have not been completed so quickly as they should be was not on account of a deficiency of funds, but on account of the difficulty of completing the armament. I remember that in 1884 I made use of the following observation when proposing an increase of the Navy:—

"Another of the principles which we have adopted in our policy of construction has been that we should take money enough to press forward as quickly as possible the ships which we have begun to construct. I have seen adverse criticisms in respect to this, but I am prepared to maintain that, during the last four years, the construction of armour-plated ships has progressed at a rate as rapid as possible consistent with the economical construction of such ships. We may have been detained in completing ships from circumstances connected with their armament."

My Lords, I mention this in order that the noble Lord who will speak on behalf of the Admiralty may give to your Lordships something more than has been said by the Prime Minister upon this subject. I should like to know from the noble Lord who represents the Admiralty how we stand at the present time with respect to guns. Some of our ships remain finished except for lack of guns, and I hope the difficulties which for many years have surrounded us with respect to the provision of big guns for our ships have been surmounted, and that we may now be sure that the provision of ordnance shall go on *pari passu* with the completion of the ships, so that we may find that some of the ships have not to wait, after completion, to be provided with their guns.

*Lord ELPHINSTONE: My Lords, representing as I do the Admiralty, I must refer to one or two of the matters which have been touched upon, and I shall endeavour as far as possible not to overlap what has been said by the Prime Minister, to avoid all reference to money matters, and as far as I can to deal with the professional details of the Bill alone. Since the present Government has been in office the present Board of Admiralty has been steadily completing what is known as the Northbrook programme. In addition to this, we have, within the last three years, laid down no fewer than 62 vessels. Seven are ships of the first class; the remainder are smaller vessels—cruisers and gunboats. On the 1st of April last there were 30 vessels in course of construction and in an advanced stage. On the 1st of April next the whole of these ships, with the exception of four—the *Nile*, *Blake*, *Blenheim*, and the *Vulcan*—will be completed. The Northbrook programme being complete, it became necessary for the Board of Admiralty to consider what the future programme should be, and last year a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to consider the subject. They were instructed to consider what principles future building programmes should be founded on, and the Committee reported they should be based on a complete survey and knowledge of the requirements of the naval services of the country; in other words, that future naval programmes should be based upon a recognition of the work which the Navy would be called upon to perform in the event of war. After a full survey of the work the Navy would be called upon to perform, the First Lord of the Admiralty, in the House of Commons on the 1st of March, brought forward a Resolution asking that the sum of £21,000,000 should be granted for

the purpose of building, arming, equipping, and preparing for sea vessels for the Navy. That Resolution was debated at considerable length and carried by a majority of 176, and followed by the Bill now under consideration. In the Queen's Speech, reference was made to the increasing expenditure on naval armament by foreign Powers. A few years ago, with the exception of Britain, there was but one great European naval Power; now there are several. If we look further abroad we find that China has armoured ships, the Brazils has armoured ships, Turkey has several ironclads—in what state of repair or efficiency I do not know. Indeed, it may be said that every foreign Power is striving to be a naval Power. It has been thought by many that the days of these large and expensive armour-clad ships were numbered. It was thought that by the introduction of torpedoes, smaller vessels would be preferable to these large ships, and that we should have a greater number of them. Well, I do not know whether the days of armour-clads are numbered or not. I do not think it is necessary to consider that now. We must take things as they are, and we must go on building according to our present lights. It is said these ships will become obsolete. That is very true, my Lords; we shall become obsolete ourselves. If we are to accept that argument, we should never do anything at all. At the period of the Crimean War who would have contemplated the design of the battle-ship of the present day, and who will venture to prophesy what it will be 25 years' hence? Foreign Powers are building such vessels and we must do the same. France is building nine battle-ships, and five projected; Russia is building five battle-ships, and seven projected; Germany has 13 projected. Italy, Spain, and the United States are also building. Altogether, there are 20 ironclads in construction, and no less than 39 projected. What are the duties which the Navy would be called upon to perform in the event of war? In the first place, to reinforce our foreign squadrons, and especially the squadron in the Mediterranean. France alone has nine armour-clad ships in commission there and eight in reserve in Toulon, while we have six armour-clads in commission and no reserve. As the noble Marquess pointed out, a strong and powerful reserve must be kept in hand ready to be sent to sea. The responsibility of protecting the population and commerce of the country is continually increasing. The population of these Islands has increased during the last 20 years by 7,000,000. It is by means of the country's commerce alone that the population can find employment, and so long as the command of the sea is retained to protect the imports and exports, the nation's factories will find a sufficient supply of raw material; but if the command of the sea were once lost, vast numbers of people would be thrown out of employment, and widespread misery and starvation would ensue. Our factories are dependant on outside supply, in point of fact. Raw material afloat is part and parcel of our industrial system on shore. The value of our imports and exports is no less than £640,000,000, an increase of £120,000,000 during the last 20 years. If we lose command of the sea, what will become of that? Then those persons who now insist that there is no necessity for increasing the Navy would be the first to reproach the Government for not, in time of peace, preparing for the eventualities of war. This increase, and rapidly-increasing increase of population, means 7,000,000 more mouths to be fed. I am told that the amount of food in this country is sufficient only to keep our population going for three months. If we lose command of the sea how are we to feed the people? As to the question of invasion, no foreign Power could invade this country without first obtaining the command of the sea, and then there would be no need to invade, because the country's food supply would be cut off, and it would be speedily starved into submission. We have nearly £200,000,000 of British shipping afloat, and that independent of the Colonial shipping. This is as well known to Foreign Powers as it is to ourselves, and it is, perhaps, better appreciated by them than by ourselves. The Secretary of the Navy in the United States, in advocating an increase in the American Fleet quite lately, called attention to the vastness of British shipping. What is the name by which the new fast cruisers lately built in France are known as? "Commerce destroyers." Whose commerce? In Russia, a volunteer fleet of armed merchantmen was

formed with the avowed purpose of cutting up British commerce, and that fleet is at the present moment in existence. My Lords, we cannot shut our eyes to these facts. These facts cannot be ignored, but by means of the cruisers to be built under the Bill, together with those in existence, the Navy will be able to afford all reasonable protection to British shipping. I say all reasonable protection, for it cannot be expected for a moment that every one of our merchant ships in every part of the world is to receive the protection of a man-of-war. So far, my Lords, for the protection of commerce. Then there are the coaling stations and the Colonies to be protected. Australia is setting a bright example in the direction of self-protection, for she is building—or we are building—seven war-ships for her, the germ of what, I am perfectly convinced, will be ere long a powerful Navy. But there are other Colonies which are not able to protect themselves, and which look to us, the mother country, for protection. The recent Naval Manœuvres have demonstrated the impossibility of effectively blockading an enemy's fleet, and the necessity of building more battle-ships and cruisers. In those manœuvres we had a supposed enemy's squadron at anchor inside Beerhaven, blockaded by a squadron at the entrance of Bantry Bay. If ever vessels were disposed so that, to all appearance it was impossible to effect an escape, it was then. Across the entrance of the bay were seven ironclads, inside that were seven cruisers, and inside that again, eight torpedo-boats, a triple line of blockade, and yet three of the enemy's ships escaped unseen. The following night the Rear Admiral with three of his ships escaped from Loch Swilley where they had been blockaded by another squadron. The blockade was raised, the English Admiral having lost touch of the enemy, fell back on the Downs for the protection of London, and the enemy were free to ravage our coast, and capture our merchant ships. What was done in mimic warfare, might, and probably would be done in real warfare. The fact was, the blockading squadrons were not sufficiently strong, although they had everything in their favour. The coast was lighted, they had facilities for coaling, and the torpedo boats were able to carry on their work night after night, having a safe bay at hand to water and rest in, none of such facilities could be obtained in actual warfare. The increase proposed is to raise the Navy to a standard of superiority over the navies of any two foreign Powers, and it is further intended that the new vessels shall be superior to any vessels of similar type yet built. Seventy new vessels are to be built. Vessels with high freeboard, greater length, greater speed, and better accommodation. This addition will consist of 8 first-class battle-ships of 14,500 tons each; 2 second-class battle-ships of 9,000 tons; 9 first-class protected cruisers of 7,300 tons; 29 second-class protected cruisers of 3,400 tons; 4 smaller cruisers of 2,600 tons; 18 torpedo gun-boats of 735 tons. Twenty of them are to be laid down in the Dockyards this year, and 32 are to be put out to contract this year; the remaining second-class battle-ship will be laid down in 1891, and the other 17 vessels will be laid down as the building slips become vacant. One or two remarks have been made about rapidity of construction. That point was criticized by Lord Granville, and it is a much more important matter than many are probably aware of. The Admiralty hope to complete the first-class battle-ships in four years, the second-class battle-ships in three years, the first-class cruisers in two and a-half years, the second-classes cruisers in two years, and the gunboats in a year and a-half. This greatly increased rapidity of construction must tend considerably in favour of economy. The *Trafalgar*, a vessel of 12,000 tons, was built in three years and three months, and a saving was effected on her estimated cost of no less than £100,000, £85,000 being saved in the cost of labour. The *Anson*, a vessel of 10,600 tons, was built in six years, and the cost of labour alone was £30,000 more than in the case of the *Trafalgar*. We propose, in addition to furnishing new boilers, new engines, and in some cases new armaments, for six ironclads this year; next year 33 ironclads will be taken in hand, and those vessels, when completed, will be more efficient and more powerful than when first constructed. The Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Naval Estimate last year suggested that outside opinion

should be called in as to the distribution of the armour on battle-ships. Outside opinion was called in, not the outside opinion of naval constructors, but of naval officers, the men who had experience in the handling of ships and who would have to fight in those ships. The distribution of armour is not a question for naval constructors alone. The amount of armour which should be carried by a ship depends on the speed of the ship, the amount of coal to be carried, the armament, the number of the crew, stores, and many other considerations. In this case several alternative designs were prepared and considered by the Admiralty. They were then sent to the three Admirals, who reported on the Naval Manœuvres, and also to the Admirals who commanded at the manœuvres. The whole of these officers then met at the Admiralty; they considered every detail, point by point, and the opinion arrived at was a unanimous opinion. Never before have designs been more thoroughly and carefully considered than those designs have been, and that by the most competent men who could be found. The distribution and thickness of armour is one of give and take. If you increase the weight of armour, you much decrease the weight elsewhere; if you increase the defensive power of the ship, you must decrease the offensive power. But, while giving every consideration to the protection of the ship, of her guns, and of her men, we must maintain her power of hitting, and hitting hard, because on that the result of the fight depends. It is by hard hitting alone that battles are won. I have no hesitation in saying that all the good results that science, skill, and forethought can produce will be found in these vessels when built. It has been asked what has guided the Admiralty in the numbers of the different classes of vessels, and why we are going to build one turret-ship and seven barbette-ships? The reason is, that we have already 13 first-class turret-ships, and the addition of another will bring the number up to 14. We have seven first-class barbette ships, and the seven more to be built will make the number equal to the 14 turret-ships. There are advantages and disadvantages in both systems. The advantage of the turret-ship is that she is most serviceable in smooth water, and her guns are better protected than the guns of the barbette ship; while in the barbette ship the guns are higher out of the water; she is a better sea-boat in a head sea, but she has the disadvantage that her guns are very much more exposed than those of the turret-ship. The designs are already described in a Parliamentary Paper, but briefly they are as follows:—The eight first class battle-ships will be armed with four 67-ton guns, with a training arc of 260°, and all four capable of being used on either broadside; 10 5-ton 6-inch 100-pounder guns; 24 6 and 3-pounder quick-firing guns, and 7 torpedo tubes. The armour belt will be 8½ feet deep, with a maximum thickness of 18 inches, extending two-thirds of the length of the vessel, while above the belt, the broadside will be protected by 5 inches of armour to a hight of 9½ feet above the water, backed by 10½ feet of coal. The heavy guns will be placed in separate armoured enclosures, protected by 18 inches of armour, situated about 250 feet apart. The advantage of placing the guns so far apart is that separately they present but comparatively small target, and there is less chance of both enclosures being simultaneously disabled. In the barbette ships, with a high free-board, the guns will be 23 feet above the water, as against 15 feet in the old turret-ships, and 17 feet in the new one. The speed will be 17½ knots with forced draught, 16 knots with natural draught, and a coal endurance at 10 knots, equal to 5,000 knots. The second-class battle-ships will be reproductions of the larger class, but smaller, with the same speed and same coal endurance. The first-class protected cruisers will be armed with two 22-ton guns, 10 5-ton guns, 12 6-pounder quick-firing guns, and 4 torpedo tubes. The speed will be 20 knots with forced draught and 18 knots continuous steaming, with a coal endurance at 10 knots equal to 10,000 knots. The second class cruisers are improved *Medea's* of 3,400 tons, as against 2,800 tons in the old *Medea's*, and 35 feet longer. They will be armed with two 5-ton guns, six 4·7-inch quick-firing guns, nine 6 and 3-pounders, and 4 torpedo tubes, with a speed of 20 knots in the measured mile and 18 knots continuous steaming, with a coal endurance at 10 knots equal to 8,000 knots. The torpedo gun-boats

will be improved "sharpshooters," with a raised deck forward, and with a speed of 21 knots, as against 18 knots in the present sharpshooters. We propose to increase the number of men by the addition of 1,100 to the Royal Marine force, 1,000 stokers, and 900 blue jackets—3,000 in all. I think, my Lords, those are all the points that I need touch upon, and I have endeavoured to do so as shortly as I can.

*LORD SUDELEY: My Lords, before this discussion closes, having always taken great interest in questions connected with the Navy, I am anxious to make a few remarks. I think the First Lord of the Admiralty deserves great praise for the manner in which he has grappled with a very difficult subject and got over so many obstacles which have on formers occasions been found insuperable. I apprehend that there is no real objection to the Bill, as, although some complaints have been raised that it binds down future Governments too much, still I think we all must concur that it is of vital importanee that a definite programme should be laid down. Ships and guns cannot be built in a day, and unless the anthorities make up their minds to definite ships and the experts are agreed, we shall go on drifting year after year, and making change after change until there is enormous delay. Fortunately, since the present Naval Constructor has been at the Admiralty, I think there is no doubt there has been a great change as regards that, and the building of ships now goes forward at a far more rapid rate and with far greater economy. It is well known that in the Dockyards ships have taken four or five years in building when they ought not to have taken more than three years. The noble Earl, Lord Northcote has referred to the question of armament. He said that was very often the great reason why ships were delayed. I think, if any noble Lord will look into this point, he will find that where the guns have been ordered at the right time, when the ships were commenced to be built, there has been no delay whatever in having the guns ready. I think there is no instance of delay in getting guns except where they have not been ordered in due time. As regards the programme, the only discussion so far as battle-ships are concerned is whether they ought to be of defensive or of offensive construction. Those who take the defensive line wish to make battle-ships far more heavily armour-plated, with greater means of being able to withstand the fire from heavy guns; whereas those who take the view that ships ought to be built with the object of being offensive as far as possible, consider that the first main object is to seek out and destroy their enemy. On the one side they ask for more armour and a less number of guns, while on the other they want more guns and less armour. My Lords, I think that the programme is right, and that the Admiralty have come to a very fair compromise between the different systems. Certainly, as far as naval officers are concerned, I have always found one opinion among them, and that is to attack your enemy as soon as you can, and not to act merely on the defensive. It has always seemed to me that that is the real position which we ought to take. It has hitherto been the pride of the Navy that they are ever ready to attack, and I sincerely trust that those who take the opposite view of defensive construction will never gain the day. The meeting which took place at the Society of Naval Architects, where the Admiralty adopted the plan of allowing their own experts to explain the programme, ended in the defensive decision. I consider that a fair compromise has been made in the programme. My Lords, there is one little criticism I should like to make, and that is simply with regard to the Report alluded to by the noble Earl, which was made at the close of the Naval Manœuvres. In that Report the statement was made very clear that we must have very large reserves. I noticed that the noble Marquess, when he introduced this Bill, laid very much stress upon that point, and he showed that if we have large reserves ready to take the place of vessels lost we should be in a very much better position to meet an enemy and to protect our commerce. We must also have a supply of cruisers. While the present programme is a thoroughly good one, and the First Lord of the Admiralty is to be congratulated on having boldly grappled with the matter, it must not be lost sight of that the supply of swift cruisers is, even now, far from being sufficient. The Report

on the recent Naval Manœuvres by three of our best Admirals makes that clear. It is perfectly clear that if that Committee are right in their Report, the present programme, large as it may be, is not nearly sufficient in cruisers to form detached squadrons and to form convoys. The nine first-class cruisers and 33 second-class cruisers are surely not enough. In the present day speed in cruisers is absolutely necessary, and that fleet will be successful which has the largest number of swift cruisers. There is no doubt that in future wars we shall have a return to the old system of smoke-ships, which is practically the same plan as Chinese stink-pots, very largely brought into use. One of the most important things in time of war will be to prevent the attempt being made by a hostile fleet to place smoke-ships to windward, so as to blind the gunners and prevent the guns being used, and then, in the confusion, starting rams and torpedoes among your fleet. It is clear that those who have the swiftest cruisers to prevent this must be victorious. So great is the necessity for this that if it were possible to make any alteration in the programme I should very much like to see one of the battle-ships given up and five cruisers substituted in its place. The speed of many of our cruisers is far less than 15 knots; and cruisers are being built which have the enormous speed of 22½ knots, armed with guns which enable them to fire at such a rapid rate as to send out a hail of shot that few ships, however armed, could stand. In our calculations, speed and armament have not sufficiently entered into comparison. The cruiser that is able to go 22 knots and is armed with 6in. guns and 4·7 40-pounders, and can fire ten rounds a minute, is a match for three or four cruisers which only go at 15 knots, and are armed with old weapons. The enormous difference between guns of the old type and guns of the new is illustrated by experiments lately carried out by the Admiralty. The new guns actually fire 10 rounds in 47 seconds, whereas the ordinary breech-loading gun of the same calibre with which our ships are armed take five minutes to fire the same number of rounds. There are few naval officers in the service who would not infinitely prefer having a fleet of vessels such as this rather than the heavy battle-ships. While great praise is due to the Admiralty for renewing the Fleet, it really only helps to bring the Fleet up to recent date, and to make up for depreciation and wear. The programme now put forward, instead of being criticized in any way as being too large, should be looked upon in its true aspect, as merely an increase of two millions on the ordinary shipbuilding Vote, which of itself would never really keep the Navy up to our necessities and responsibilities. My Lords, the noble Lord who represents the Admiralty has alluded to the great increase of our commerce. I do not intend to go into that again, but I do think it is not only necessary to have sufficient ships ready to protect our commerce, but that we should keep up our Fleet to a high state of efficiency. My Lords, I think it would be fatal to allow our cruisers and smaller craft to dwindle down again into an inefficient state.

*LORD HARRIS: My Lords, in a Return made in April, 1889, the number was given of breech-loading guns required for the naval service, and giving in detail the different classes of guns. As regards the new naval programme the whole of the guns have been ordered. But there is something else to be attended to besides ordering the guns, and that is to keep contractors up to their time. There have been instances of ships being delayed because contracts for guns have not been completed within the specified time, and also from guns failing at proof.

LORD ALCESTER: My Lords, after the very lucid explanation we have had from the noble Lords who have spoken, I only desire as a naval officer to give my cordial approval to all that the Government are doing; and I indorse all that has been said in commendation of the First Lord. I sincerely trust that the programme will be strictly adhered to, and that if contractors fail to keep time, penalties will be enforced—for the first time in living memory.

*THE EARL OF CLANWILLIAM: My Lords, I beg also as a naval officer to indorse all that has fallen from the noble Lord who has just sat down. I must express my approval of the programme, both as to quantity and quality: quantity because it was as much as the Government could put in hand, and quality because the officers

who sat on the Board of Construction had the entire confidence of the officers of the Navy. But I would remind your Lordships that in four years ships and guns will be falling out, engines and boilers will require renewing, and an ironclad cannot be repaired and refitted now certainly under 18 months. So that you must take that into consideration in totalling up your Navy at the end of four years. It is my belief that the programme will do little more than make up for waste.

LORD BRASSEY: My Lords, I am unwilling to allow this debate to close without expressing my great satisfaction that the proposals for which the Bill makes provision have been brought forward by the Government. Viewed in the light of the experience gained in the interesting Naval Manœuvres of last year, it is certain that our naval position is not sufficiently assured. It is difficult to fix the standard of strength for the British Navy upon a satisfactory basis. The First Lord of the Admiralty has laid it down that we ought to be equal or superior to any two Powers. Looking to the amount of our mercantile tonnage, looking to the interests we have at stake as a Colonial Power, we should scarcely be aiming too high if we resolved to maintain our strength and our rate of progress and construction at double those of the next strongest Navy to our own. If this were our settled policy it would tend to discourage, rather than to stimulate, a rivalry in expenditure. There are indications that such a result might be anticipated in the Estimates recently brought forward for the year 1890 by a neighbouring Power. Passing from the amount of construction proposed in the new programme to the designs, I think that the Government have pursued a course which must command general approval. They have consulted not only the able Naval officers now serving at Whitehall, but the officers outside the Department who have had the most recent experience in the command of fleets. As their chief professional adviser they have in Mr. White a naval architect of the highest ability. I will not trouble the House with criticisms of designs which have been matured by able experts. As the compiler of a naval annual, I have had frequent occasion to study and compare the designs of ships, British and foreign. I have seen no design in any class which could be accepted as perfect. Every ship of war is a compromise. Again, in offensive or defensive power is inevitably balanced by a loss in manœuvring qualities. In a large Navy you must have all types represented. If you build big ships, you must group nimble auxiliaries around them. The first-class battleships you are about to lay down will cost £1,000,000 sterling. They represent the most effective combination of power which the ingenuity and skill of the present day can contrive; but they are not invulnerable. A squadron of such ships blockading an enemy's ports full of torpedo boats would be in a position of great peril in darkness and in fog. For the protection of those great floating fortresses we must build sea-keeping torpedo vessels in numbers largely in excess of the present proposals. In a naval action armoured rams would give invaluable support to large ships. In the smoke and confusion the guns of the heavy ships would tend to become less reliable weapons, and the chances of dealing a fatal blow with the ram and torpedo would be greater. These considerations will, I think, impress every thoughtful naval administrator with the conviction that the programme of construction now proposed, necessary as it is and bearing every mark of ingenious and able design, will by no means supply all that is needed to complete the Navy. A large flotilla of sea-keeping torpedo vessels and numerous armoured rams are indispensable auxiliaries, and it should be the duty of those who take an interest in the Navy to press for the construction of those auxiliaries in future years. Cruisers are absolutely necessary, and the new programme, I am glad to see, will give us a strong reinforcement of fast and efficient vessels.

THE EARL OF LEITRIM: My Lords, I desire to say a few words with regard to the construction of vessels intended for mounting big guns. My point comes in upon what was said by Lord Harris with regard to the carrying of guns. In my opinion, sufficient guns have not been ordered, and I think sufficient provision has scarcely been made in the scheme of the Government for the supply of ordnance. With

regard to the want of fast cruisers, I would point out that, in case of necessity, we have already vessels available in the ocean-going passenger liners, and I believe the Board of Admiralty are not going far enough in the direction in which foreign Powers are going—that is to say, providing armaments for those ocean liners. I have been informed that such great foreign companies as the "Messageries Maritimes," and other large companies sailing under foreign flags, actually carry in their holds large guns, ready to be mounted at a moment's notice. I think that guns should be carried on board our large ships and ocean-liners, and also that encouragement should be given for their carrying men who have gone through a course of training, and who would therefore be qualified to fight those guns in an emergency. I believe, my Lords, that is a direction in which the Admiralty might add strength to the naval defences of this country.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I only desire to say, in answer to the noble Lord who has just sat down, that the point he has mentioned has not been lost sight of, and that arrangements have been made which would in the event of war place at our disposal a large number of vessels of the class he mentions.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the whole House to-morrow.

PALATINE COURT OF DURHAM BILL. (No. 71.)

Read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House to-morrow.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1883) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 87.)

House in Committee, on Re-commitment (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment, and to be read 3ª on Friday next.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL. (No. 12.)

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL. (No. 78.)

NATIONAL DEBT BILL. (No. 79.)

House in Committee (according to order); Bills reported without Amendment; and to be read 3ª to-morrow.

House adjourned at a quarter past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 27th May, 1889.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

MANCHESTER, SHEFFIELD, AND LINCOLNSHIRE RAILWAY (STEAMBOATS) BILL.

Order for Third Reading, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a third time."

MR. C. WILSON (Hull, W.): I beg to move as an Amendment that the Bill be read a third time on this day six months.

MR. SPEAKER: Then the Bill must stand over.

Third Reading deferred until to-morrow.

SHORTLANDS AND NUNHEAD RAILWAY BILL. (*By order.*)

Order for consideration, read.

MR. AINSLIE (Lancashire, N., Lonsdale): I understand that this Bill is likely to interfere with the Lewisham Recreation Ground. I should, therefore, like to have an assurance from the hon. Member for Darlington (Mr. J. Fry), who was Chairman of the Select Committee by whom it was inquired into, that it will do no harm.

MR. T. FRY (Darlington): In reply to the question which has been asked in reference to this Bill, I wish, as Chairman of the Committee, to say that the opposition to it was based upon a very slender foundation indeed. The Railway proposed to be constructed is promoted in the interests of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company

in order to avoid the necessity of passing through Penge tunnel, which is an awkward tunnel for the service of the railway. It does pass through a narrow neck of land which has been set apart for the recreation of the people of Lewisham; but the district Board of Health of Lewisham are in favour of the Bill, and it excites but a very small amount of opposition. The piece of land which it is proposed to take is of an irregular character, very much in the shape of the figure 8; the river Ravensbourne runs through a portion of it, and it is proposed to cross that river by an ornamental bridge. The quantity of land taken is ¼ of an acre, and the Railway Company propose to give five times the amount—namely, 1¼ acre in return. As I have said, the opposition to the Bill was of a very minute character, and the only opposition of any consequence was that of the London County Council, who desire to preserve the land as an open space. The Committee were quite unanimous that the Bill ought to be passed, and I believe they have as much interest in the preservation of open spaces as any hon. Member in this House. The only alternative to the scheme of the railway company is to take a piece of land immediately outside the recreation ground, which would probably be at once covered with a small class of houses of a rental value of not more than £30 or £40 a year. It is now proposed to construct an embankment and to plant it with shrubs and trees and make it ornamental in its character. In this way it will add to rather than detract from the attractions of the recreation ground. For these reasons I trust that the House will pass the Bill.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.), in moving that the Bill be taken into consideration on this day six months, said: I understand that this Bill is opposed by the London County Council.

MR. T. FRY: No.

MR. HOWELL: That is what I understand, and that it was at the instance of the London County Council that my hon. Friend the Member for Shoreditch opposed the Second Reading on the last occasion. If the London County Council are satisfied with the land proposed to be substituted for this small piece, of course a considerable amount of the objection will be removed. I have always thought that it is most undesirable to allow any portion of a recreation ground to be cut through by a railway and its character entirely altered in consequence, and I confess that I am not quite satisfied with the explanation of the company in regard to this Bill.

*MR. KERANS (Lincoln): In reply to the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell), I wish to state a few facts which I hope will influence him. In the first place, the hon. Member does not seem to be aware that there is a railway already running through this ground, and that it was a question whether to tunnel under that line or to make a bridge over it. The Committee upon the Bill sat for four days, and came to the decision that, taking into consideration all the circumstances, the proposed line, instead of being a drawback, would decidedly be of advantage to the recreation ground. Upon the land just outside the recreation ground it is only possible to erect houses of a very small description, and every winter the land itself is flooded. So far as the Committee could gather, the land proposed to be given in exchange for that taken away will be of infinitely greater value.

MR. HOWELL: Do the two pieces adjoin?

*MR. KERANS: Yes. Perhaps I may be allowed to state a somewhat extraordinary circumstance connected with this piece of land. It has actually been given to the London County Council by a gentleman who very strongly supports the Bill, and not only has he given this plot, but he has also given two acres more, or thereabouts, through which the river runs, which is supposed to give such charming features to the site. I really think, that although our love for open spaces should be as great as possible, it ought to be controlled by a certain amount of reason. So far as the Committee could see, the erection of this bridge will do no harm whatever to the recreation ground. Mr. Harrison, and various other members of the London County Council who gave evidence, assented to the proposition that as a matter of fact it was not the bridge that was objected to as much as the embankment outside. The evidence offered on behalf of the opponents was of the most trifling character. Every single landlord throughout the

district was in favour of it, as also was every public body affected except the London County Council. Even the two local members who sit in the Council are in favour of it. At public meetings petitions have been adopted in support of it, and except the extreme care which the London County Council manifested for the preservation of open spaces, there was no opposition to the Bill that was really worth considering. I hope that the hon. Member for Bethnal Green will withdraw his opposition and allow the Bill to go to another place, where I am sure that every argument that can be adduced in opposition to it will be fully heard.

*MR. FIRTH (Dundee): The London Council did oppose this Bill in Committee. They opposed it upon a ground which they have taken successfully in regard to another Bill, and which they intend to take in respect to all Bills in future—namely, that where a railway company or any Public Authority propose, without their consent, prejudicially to affect recreation grounds and open spaces placed under their control they will defend the public interest. In this case the question was, shortly, whether this proposed railway would prejudicially affect the Lewisham recreation ground. The opinion of the Lewisham Local Authorities can scarcely be regarded as being of vital importance, seeing that they are more concerned in the increased ratable value of property which the construction of a railway generally brings than in preserving intact open spaces which have been largely paid for out of the public money. The question before the Committee was whether this railway would prejudicially affect this open space as an open space, and there was, in the first instance, some reason to believe that it had been selected by the railway company because they were likely to obtain it cheaper than the adjoining land. The Bill as it left the Committee contained a proposal to carry the railway, by means of a bridge, across this open space, and the hon. Member for Darlington and the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Kerans) have suggested that a bridge would be of advantage, and that, so far from objecting, we ought to be thankful to the railway company for the proposal they have made. If my hon Friend carries his opposition to a Division, I shall support him; but if not, the London Council will, in the same interests and for the same object which induced them to oppose the Bill in Committee, carry their opposition elsewhere.

*MR. MOSS (Winchester): Perhaps I may be allowed to say, having served on the Committee to which the Bill was referred, that the inhabitants of Lewisham, the public officials, the Board of Health, and every one connected with the town are in favour of the measure. Public meetings have been held in support of it, and some of the most influential inhabitants appeared before the Committee, and gave evidence in its favour. It was opposed only by the London County Council, who have no special interest in the neighbourhood, and who simply called one or two of their own officers, who gave evidence upon a matter which they clearly did not understand. The piece of land which has been set apart for a recreation ground is a portion of a hill connected by a narrow neck of land 90 feet wide, with a larger portion below, which lower portion is already bounded by a line of railway, and it is proposed to cross this neck by an ornamental bridge. The embankment for the proposed line is outside this land altogether, so that but for this narrow strip over which the railway bridge will pass, the London County Council would have had no *locus standi*. The company have agreed to give 1¼ acres of land for the quarter of an acre they take, and the embankment is to be laid out ornamentally with walks, and shrubs, and trees, and over which the public will have full rights. The Committee gave the subject their serious attention, and came to the conclusion that the Bill ought to pass. It is unfortunate that the London County Council should have commenced their career by opposing everything that is brought before them. I am afraid that the "appointed day" which called the Council into existence, may be found not to have been without an appropriate meaning if this sort of thing is to go on.

MR. HOWELL: As the London County Council intend to carry their opposition to another place, I think it is hardly necessary to divide the House on this occasion.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill considered, and ordered to be read a third time.

EAST INDIA (COOPER'S HILL COLLEGE).

Address for—

"Copy of the Appendix to the Revised Prospectus of the Indian Civil Engineering College, Cooper's Hill, for the year 1871, referred to in Parliamentary Paper, No. 148, of Session 1871, page 30, paragraph 44."—(*Mr. Hubbard.*)

GAME LAWS (SCOTLAND).

Return ordered—

"Under the Game (Day Trespass) Act for Scotland, 2 and 3 William IV., chapter 68 (17th day of July, 1832), and the Game Laws Amendment (Scotland) Act, 1877, 40 and 41 Victoria, chapter 28, showing (1) persons convicted since the passing of the Act of 1832; (2) place and date of conviction; (3) penalties and forfeitures; (4) name of moderator or other officer of the Kirk Session of the parish where the offence was committed, to whom the penalties and forfeiture were paid for the use and benefit of the poor of such parish; and (5) dates of payment."—(*Dr. M'Donald.*)

SUGAR TRADE.

Copy ordered—

"Of Report to the Board of Trade, entitled, 'Progress of the Sugar Trade,' with Appendix, in continuation of the Statistical Tables contained in Parliamentary Papers, No. 353, of Session 1888, and other information."—(*Sir Michael Hicks Beach.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 172.)

QUESTIONS.

SHIPPING REGULATIONS.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been directed to the *Bullionist* of 4th May, which states that a British vessel which had run for four years with a free board enabling her to carry 700 tons of cargo, had been stopped by the Board of Trade and required to increase her clear side and reduce her freight capacity by over 100 tons, whereupon the owners transferred her to a foreign flag, under which she loads to her former extent, and at the same British ports, free of all the beneficent regulations surrounding British shipping; if a state of affairs so detrimental to the British seafaring population is possible, and if it is a fact that the law ignores overloading in home ports under a foreign flag, and so gives it an advantage in the quotation of freights; and in such a case, if steps will be taken to remedy this condition of things?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I understand that the case to which the hon. Member refers is that of the *Ernst*, late *Wolf*, and I can only say that, so far as the Board of Trade have been able to ascertain, she has not been to an English port since her transfer to a foreign flag. I have instructed my officers to take steps for detaining her if she attempts to proceed to sea in an overladen state from a British port.

THE VESTRIES AND ARTIZANS' DWELLINGS.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether he is aware that the Vestry of St. James's and St. John's, Clerkenwell, are compelling the owners of artizans' dwellings to sign a new agreement to become liable for the rates on more onerous terms than those already entered into with the Vestry, under threat that, if the owners do not agree to the altered terms, the Vestry will collect the rates direct from the tenants; and whether such arrangement is in accordance with the law, and has its sanction?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am informed by the Vestry of St. James's and St. John's, Clerkenwell, that for some years past the owners of artizans' dwellings have been allowed a commission under Section 3 of the Poor Rate Assessment and Collection Act, 1869, of 20 per cent where they have agreed to pay the rates whether the premises are occupied or not. The Vestry, however, have recently re-considered the subject, and have come to the conclusion that this rate of commission is considerably in excess of the loss sustained by the owners from empties, and that they are therefore deriving undue benefit at the expense of the rates. The Vestry are confirmed in this view by the fact that in adjoining parishes only 15 per cent is allowed. They have therefore terminated the late agreements and have

offered to enter into new ones, under which a commission of 15 per cent will be allowed. I am not aware of any reason for doubting that the action of the Vestry is in accordance with the law. No sanction of the Local Government Board is required, and they have no jurisdiction in the matter.

IRELAND—THE LAND COMMISSION.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland when Returns of Proceedings, &c. of the Irish Land Commission of a later date than February last, and of Judicial Rents than February, 1888 (being the dates of the last of such Returns presented), will be in the hands of Members?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): Returns have already been presented, and will be in the hands of hon. Members shortly.

MR. WILLIAM CORBET (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that widespread dissatisfaction exists throughout Ireland generally as to the inaction of the Land Commissioners in regard to the fixing of rents, especially on the part of leaseholders; whether he is aware that in cases in which originating notices were served before the 29th September, 1887, no steps have been taken to deal with them, and that landlords are serving with writs for the existing rents; whether he will inquire as to the truth of the statements made, and urge the Land Commission to proceed with greater despatch; and, whether he can state when the next sittings will be held for the Eastern Division of the county of Wicklow?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners report that in the year ending August, 1887, there were disposed of in round numbers by Sub-Commissioners 3,900 cases; in the year ending August, 1888, 9,900 cases; and during the period of about eight months to the 30th of April, 1889, 11,800 cases, and that all possible speed is being used in the matter. From the eastern portion of the county Wicklow there are 204 applications to fix fair rents as yet unheard, and which were received before the 29th of September, 1887. A list will shortly be issued for a Sub-Commission sitting for that district.

THE TRAFFIC IN PICCADILLY.

MR. HULSE (Salisbury): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, in view of the constantly increasing traffic in Piccadilly at all seasons of the year, a further outlet for vehicular traffic might be established by opening a road across the Green Park from the corner in Piccadilly facing Devonshire House to the right of the Grosvenor Place entrance at the top of Constitution Hill?

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): Before the right hon. Gentleman replies to the question, may I ask whether after the expression of opinion in Committee of Supply, he will consider the desirability of opening out Constitution Hill, instead of disfiguring the Green Park as the hon. Member suggests?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, University of Dublin): I agree with my hon. Friend that some easing of the pressure of traffic in Piccadilly is desirable, but I cannot say that I could propose the plan suggested by his question. In answer to the supplemental question, I can only say at present that the subject mentioned by the hon. Member has not been lost sight of.

THE SCHOOL OF MUSKETRY.

COLONEL LAURIE (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether he will take into consideration the advisability of reviving the modified course at the School of Musketry for Officers and Non-commissioned Officers of the Volunteer Force?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): A proposal is now under consideration for opening the School of Musketry to the officers of the Volunteers.

BOUNDARIES FOR RATING PURPOSES.

SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Cadastral Survey of the United Kingdom being nearly completed, the

Government will now take into consideration the desirability of utilizing the maps as the basis of valuation according to which all public and local assessments should be levied in England and Wales, as is now the case in Ireland; and, whether, considering the care with which the boundaries of parishes and other territorial divisions have been ascertained and laid down on the Ordnance Survey maps, the Government propose to take any steps which would secure throughout England and Wales their legal recognition as boundaries for rating and administrative purposes?

*MR. RITCHIE: The Ordnance Survey maps are now available, and there is no reason to doubt are used to a considerable extent by the Assessment Committees in the revision of the lists prepared by the overseers, and the Local Government Board have, in numerous cases, informed the overseers that where it appears that for the purposes of the preparation of the valuation lists by them the Ordnance Survey maps would be of assistance, they are empowered to obtain them at the cost of the rates. As regards the second point, I cannot concur in any proposal that legal recognition should be given to the Ordnance Survey maps with regard to boundaries of parishes and other territorial divisions. The 4 and 5 Vict., c. 30, which refers to the survey, expressly provided that nothing in the Act should extend or be deemed to be construed to extend to ascertain, define, alter, enlarge, increase or decrease, or in any way affect any boundaries of any county, city, borough, town, parish, or other district or division. The Ordnance Survey has been made subject to this distinct statutory saving, and it appears to me that it would not be right, now that the survey is approaching completion, to alter one of the conditions under which it has been made.

MILITIA TRAINING.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is the fact, as stated in the Report on the Musketry of the Infantry Militia for 1888, issued by Colonel Tongue, Commandant of the School of Musketry, that three battalions did not fire because they were trained at places where no ranges were available; and, if so, who is responsible for sending these battalions to train at places where there were no ranges within reach; whether it is the fact, as stated in the same Report, that in the following corps—namely, 3rd Dorset, 3rd Royal Munster Fusiliers, 4th Connaught Rangers, 3rd Welsh, 4th Royal West Kent, 4th Royal Irish, 6th Connaught Rangers, 3rd Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 5th Royal Enniskillen Fusiliers, 7th King's Royal Rifle Corps, 3rd Royal Irish, 5th Connaught Rangers, and 4th Royal Dublin Fusiliers, over 20 per cent of the men were not exercised in musketry at all, and what is the reason why so large a percentage were left untrained; whether it is the fact, as stated in the above Report, that 4,381 recruits were not trained in ball practice at all during the annual training of 1888; and, if so, which were the battalions of Militia in which the military education of the recruits was thus neglected; whether, on the other hand, in some corps, the recruits during their first annual training are put through, first, the recruit's course of musketry, and then the trained militiamen's course, and whether this practice has the approval of H.R.H. the Commander-in-Chief; and, whether he will direct that in all future musketry Reports issued by the Commandant of the School of Musketry the names of all corps which thus put their recruits through the double course should be specially mentioned?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: It is not possible within the limits of an answer to a question in this House to give a satisfactory reply to the points raised by my hon. Friend; but I shall be happy to place at his disposal all the information in my power.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE: I also beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to an article which appeared in the *Army and Navy Gazette* of the 30th March last describing the manner in which battalions of Militia Infantry are trained when in country quarters; whether it is the case, as therein stated, that the companies which are undergoing their course of musketry are struck off all duty during the seven days of their course, whether the range be near or far, and whether it takes a man two hours or eight to shoot his ten rounds;

and, if so, whether he would consider the advisability of making some change whereby so much loss of time might be avoided; whether the following paragraph from the above named article is a true statement of fact:—

"In many cases, since the reform of compulsory musketry instruction was introduced, Colonels have reduced the amount of drill to almost vanishing point. We have seen the diary of a Junior Captain in one of these mismanaged regiments by which it appears that though he had no leave off the parades to which, as Captain, he was ordered to attend, he only appeared seven times at battalion drill, while the whole amount of time allowed for Captains to drill and handle their companies themselves was two hours during the whole month."

And, if this be a true statement of fact, will he take steps to enforce the direction of the new "Infantry Drill Book," which lays down on p. 63 that every company is frequently to be exercised by its own Officers?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: My attention was not called to this newspaper article quoted; and I must say that, considering the attention which is now paid both to drill and rifle instruction, I think the experience of the Junior Captain must be very exceptional. If we knew his regiment some strong steps would probably be taken. The musketry course occupies seven working days, and two companies at a time are struck off duty for it; but the firing only takes on the average half the day, and the other half is available for drill and instruction. If the present regulations are properly carried out, they do not appear to call for alteration.

ADVERTISING ON POSTAGE STAMPS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has received any offer for the privilege of advertising on the backs of the postage stamps which are sold to the public to the extent of two thousand four hundred millions annually; whether he has received any offer for the privilege of advertising on the back of telegraph forms which are now issued to and received by the public at the rate of over one hundred millions annually; whether before accepting any offer he will call for designs for the neatest form of advertisement to be allowed on the back of the postage stamps as is done in the Colony of Queensland; whether he will invite competition from advertisers and advertising agents at so much per million advertisements; whether he is able to inform the House of the amount of revenue derived by the Queensland Government from this source of advertisements; and, whether he has consulted any advertising agents, with a view of ascertaining whether the revenue from this neat form of advertisements would be sufficient to establish ocean penny postage throughout the Empire and to America?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): Suggestions have been repeatedly made that the Post Office might derive a considerable revenue by allowing advertisements on the back of postage stamps, and on both the back and the front of telegraph and other official forms. Some of these suggestions are before the Department at the present moment. If it should be decided to entertain them, endeavours will be made to ascertain the commercial value of the concession, and the effect of admitting competition will not be lost sight of. I am not able to inform the House of the amount of revenue derived by the Government of Queensland from advertisements of this kind. I think the hon. Member's last question is a less one for advertising agents than for advertising politicians.

IRELAND—FAIR RENTS.

MR. BYRNE (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that tenants in the Rathdrum Union, county Wicklow, who served notices on and after the 28th September, 1881, to have fair rents fixed, have up to the present been unable to get their cases heard, although the Land Commission has been frequently applied to to hasten the next sitting; whether complaints have reached him that very great hardship has been inflicted on such tenants by the great delay; and whether he will take steps to have a sitting of the Sub-Commissioners for that Union on an early day?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The applications of the tenants of the Rathdrum Union prior to the the 28th of September, 1887, to have fair rents fixed have been adjudicated upon. The Sub-Commission now sitting in an adjoining Union will,

upon the termination of its labours there, take up a list of cases received subsequently to the above date in Rathdrum Union.

THE ROYAL ARSENAL.

MR. BROADHURST (Wolverhampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether mechanics applying for employment at the Royal Arsenal are paid for the satisfactory execution of work done to test their fitness for Government service?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Test-work is not paid for in the Royal Arsenal.

H.M.S. *SULTAN.*

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty when it is intended to hold a Court of Inquiry into the circumstances attending the attempts to save H.M.S. *Sultan*?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The Court of Inquiry has been appointed to inquire into the circumstances attending the attempts to save Her Majesty's ship *Sultan*, and it will begin its sittings on Wednesday next.

NAVAL CUTLASSES.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what tests are now applied by Naval officials to the cutlasses supplied in the Navy; and whether it is the fact that the War Office, who supplied the weapons, require the Admiralty to accept them as supplied without testing them on their own account.

LORD G. HAMILTON: No tests are applied by the Naval officials to the cutlasses supplied to the Navy. The Admiralty are responsible for the handiness of the pattern, but are satisfied to accept the decision of the inspecting branch of the War Office as to the quality of the material and the strength of the design.

ENNIS POST OFFICE.

MR. COX (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether a site has yet been selected for the new Post Office in Ennis, and when the work is likely to be commenced?

*MR. RAIKES: An apparently suitable site has been offered for a new Post Office at Ennis, and building plans are now under consideration by the Board of Public Works. As soon as the plans have been matured, the necessary application will be made to the Treasury for authority to carry out the scheme.

PRINTING OF RAILWAY FARES.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has power to compel the different railway companies of the United Kingdom to print the fares charged on all tickets issued; and, if so, whether he will exercise it?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: No, Sir; the Board of Trade have no such power.

MR. CAUSTON: Then I beg to give notice that I will introduce a Bill.

TODMORDEN RAILWAY JUNCTION.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Local Board of Todmorden have been making representations, both to the Board of Trade and to the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, for more than eight years, with a view to the construction of a footbridge or subway at Todmorden Junction, where, it is stated, an average of 1,000 persons daily have to cross the lines from one platform to the other; whether the railway company has postponed this work from year to year on the plea that it should form part of a general scheme of alterations, and has, only recently, after renewed and most urgent pressure by the Board of Trade, agreed to prepare plans for a subway; whether the Board of Trade has any guarantee that the work will be promptly carried out; whether, as the result of an inquiry held in April, 1877, into a fatal accident to a lad employed by the Great Western Railway Company at New Milford Station, Colonel Rich reported that the shunting yard and the approaches to the fish stage at the station were most dangerous both to the railway servants and labourers employed and to the public (who cross the lines to reach the public ferry); whether Colonel Rich recommended that the railway company should build a footbridge for the safety of their servants and the public; whether the railway company has repeatedly declined to carry out this recommendation, and has, instead of

building the bridge, instituted prosecutions against the public for crossing the lines to the ferry; whether the Board of Trade have any statutory power to enforce Colonel Rich's recommendations; and, whether, having regard to the delay on the part of the railway companies, in these and other similar cases, to comply with urgent recommendations of the Board of Trade, he intends to bring in a Bill this Session to extend the powers of the Board of Trade to enforce their recommendations in such cases?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The question of the construction of a bridge or subway at Todmorden Junction has been, since 1881, brought under the attention of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company. The company has only recently agreed to prepare plans for a subway, which will be submitted to the directors. The Board of Trade trust that the necessary work will be carried out, but they have no compulsory powers in the matter. As regards New Milford, Colonel Rich reported on July 22, 1887, "that the station yard at both sides is open by being incompletely fenced," and he recommended that the company should fence their property and be urged to build a footbridge across their railway. The Board of Trade have no power to enforce this recommendation, but they have been informed that the cost of the bridge would be about £600, and that the directors would be recommended to bear one-half the expense. Negotiations are pending with the view of obtaining contributions from the locality, and these are being pressed forward as speedily as possible. A Bill on this, among other subjects connected with public safety on railways, is in course of preparation, but looking to the state of public business I do not expect to be able to make any progress with it this Session.

NEW ADMIRALTY AND WAR OFFICE BUILDINGS.

MR. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether offices are being rented for the use of the Admiralty at a yearly cost of £4,460, and for the War Office at £5,960; whether the estimated cost of the proposed new Admiralty and War Office buildings is correctly estimated at £187,250, representing a permanent annual debt of some £5,000; whether, therefore, the country is paying about £5,000 a year for not erecting these buildings; whether the Government propose to commence these buildings next year; what was done with the £5,000 voted last year towards the said buildings; and, what is being done with the £5,000 voted this year for the same purpose?

*MR. PLUNKET: The rents paid for offices rented for the use of the Admiralty amount to £4,410 per annum. The estimated cost of the new Admiralty buildings is £192,500. This estimate does not include the erection of a new War Office, and the rents now paid for buildings rented for War Office purposes do not affect the question of my hon. Friend. The new Admiralty buildings will be begun this year, and the £5,000 voted this year will be applied to the works. Of the £5,000 voted last year £2,000 was applied in redemption of the land tax, and we also paid the cost of some preliminary operations on the site. The balance (£2,500) we paid into the Exchequer.

THE NEW STAIRCASES IN WESTMINSTER HALL.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works by whose instructions the stone carvings of birds and beasts have been placed on the new staircases in Westminster Hall; and was their erection submitted to and sanctioned by the Select Committee to which the new works were referred?

MR. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): I have also to ask who is responsible for the erection of the sculptures which have recently been placed upon the four pedestals of the new central staircase in Westminster Hall; and who is responsible for the design and execution of these sculptures?

*MR. PLUNKET: Mr. Pearson, R.A., is responsible for the erection, design, and execution of the sculptures mentioned in these questions, and he informs me that the sculptured animals on the newels of the new staircases in Westminster Hall represent the heraldic supporters bearing arms of Richard II., Edward III., and Queen Victoria. The lion and falcon at the south entrance of the central stairs are the heraldic supporters of Edward III. The two stags

at the other entrance of these stairs are those of Richard II., and the present Royal arms and supporters are on the staircase at the north end of the hall. Richard II. and Edward III. were selected as the two kings who had done the most building to the Palace of Westminster since the time of Rufus. Mr. Pearson further assures me that there are numerous old examples of figures and animals on newels of staircases and tops of pedestals, both with and without heraldic meaning, and in the Houses of Parliament itself heraldry both in glass and stone has been most freely used. I may remind the House that they will find two heraldic animals very similar to those now complained of at the top of the principal staircase at the south end of Westminster Hall, which were placed there many years ago by Mr. Barry.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: Will the right hon. Gentleman be kind enough to answer the second part of my question?

MR. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: And also to answer the second part of mine—by whom were the sculptures executed?

*MR. PLUNKET: I thought I had exhausted the subject in my desire to satisfy my right hon. Friend. I have said that Mr. Pearson was responsible for the general execution. I cannot say who has done the actual handywork. A view of the staircase at the northern end of the hall is shown on plan No. 8, which was submitted to the Select Committee. In that plan there is shown on the newels of that staircase an indistinct figure which I cannot explain; there is an indication of something.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is himself responsible for many of the fearful creatures in Westminster Hall?

*MR. PLUNKET: I am not responsible for the fearful creatures in Westminster Hall or in this House.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I beg to give notice that I will, on the Estimates, move to reduce the salary of the right hon. Gentleman.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE HOURS OF LABOUR.

MR. BROADHURST: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any further progress has been made in the proposal for an International Conference on the hours of labour; and whether he can make any statement to the House on the subject?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government intend to accept the invitation of the Swiss Government to a Conference to be held at Berne with regard to work in factories; but with the reservation that their representative will not be able to discuss any proposal to limit the hours of adult male labour or to restrict production.

IRELAND—PRISON TREATMENT OF MEMBERS.

*MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. John O'Connor, M.P., and other prisoners under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act in Tullamore gaol, after having been placed at exercise together, were, by the order of the Governor, acting, as he stated, upon instructions from the Irish Prisons Boards, put to solitary exercise, in disregard to their protest, and their claim to exercise together according to their class; whether one of the new prison rules leaves discretion in this regard to the Governor or Surgeon of the prison; how it has happened in this case that the exercise of the Governor's discretion has been overruled; and whether prisoners under the said Act will be permitted to exercise together as other prisoners are. I also wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he can say whether Mr. T. J. Condon who is in a state of ill health is still obliged to occupy a flagged cell?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Upon that point I have received no information. In reply to the question on the Paper I have to say that the General Prisons Board Report that it is the case that upon the transfer to Tullamore prison of prisoners, John O'Connor, M.P., and T. J. Condon, M.P., the Governor with a view to economizing supervision, arranged that they, with the three other Crimes Act prisoners, each of whom had up to then been exercised separately, should all take exercise at the same time. This arrangement, however, involved the disregard of the established classification of prisoners for purposes of exercise. The Chairman, as visiting

member of the Board, pointed this out, and that in future the previous practice of exercising these prisoners separately should be reverted to. The new rule referred to is to the effect indicated; but all prison rules are, in the opinion of the General Prisons Board, administered subject to their control. The Board also report that the system of separate exercise has been found to work satisfactorily up to the present. Should any practical difficulty arise it will be dealt with as the circumstances may require. But in no case can convicted criminal prisoners be treated as a particular class on the ground that they have been convicted under a particular statute.

MR. SEXTON: Are we to understand that the new rules which declare the conditions under which exercise is to be taken are subject to the discretion not of the Governor and the Surgeon but of the Prisons Board? Would it not be for the convenience of the prison arrangements that prisoners under the Coercion Act should be exercised at the same time? Is there any reason why they should not be exercised at the same time as ordinary prisoners?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; there is a reason. It is impossible for all the prisoners to take exercise together, as they have to follow the classification accordingly as they were convicted, for a first or subsequent offence. The ordinary classification would have to be abolished if the suggestion of the hon. Member were carried into effect.

MR. SEXTON: What is the meaning to be attached to the new rule which allows a discretion to the Governor and Surgeon, if in the exercise of that discretion for the first time it is overruled?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that in all matters of health the prison surgeon is supreme, but I also understand that in his administration of the prison rules the Governor is liable to the supervision of the Board.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): Is not that one of the subjects referred to in the Report of the Committee presided over by Lord Aberdare?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The subjects referred to the Committee appear in the Papers which have been laid before the House.

In reply to Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.),

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Taking exercise together means walking in the same yard, but not walking close together. I understand that in this case the Chairman of the Prisons Board was the Visiting Member of the Board, and I presume that it was in the exercise of his ordinary duty that he gave these directions to the Governor.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I understand that the Prisons Board consists of three gentlemen, of whom the right hon. Gentleman is the head. Will he give instructions in reference to the new rules that Mr. Burke will in future have the goodness to consult his colleagues?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. Burke acted in the exercise of his discretion as Visiting Member of the Board. I am not a member of the Prisons Board.

MR. SEXTON: Is the new discretion to the Government permanently overruled?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There have been no directions given to the Governor of Tullamore Gaol alone, but to all the governors. As I have already said, the governors of prisons will act under the rules, but they are liable to supervision by the Prisons Board.

THE PRISONER MARY SWEENY.

MR. JORDAN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the case of Mary Sweeny, of Doonagore, Doolin, county Clare, a widow with five children, who was imprisoned in Limerick Gaol on the 9th of January last at the instance of Mr. Kelly, County Court Judge at Ennis, and whose tenancy in her holding has been determined since her imprisonment and she made a caretaker; is he aware that an application has been made to Judge Kelly to liberate her, she proposing to give solvent security to appear before him when and where he might require, but has been refused; and if, considering all the circumstances of the case and the length of her imprisonment, he will advise that she be liberated?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This woman was committed to prison on the 25th of January under an attachment order issued by the County Court Judge, in consequence of her refusal to allow the officer nominated by the Court to survey her farm. Since her imprisonment the tenancy of the holding has been

determined for non-payment of rent. At the last Quarter Sessions her son applied to the County Court Judge for her release, and the Judge stated that the moment the land was surveyed he would order her discharge; but the son stated in open court that he would not allow the land to be surveyed. The case is not one for consideration on the ground of the exercise of the prerogative of mercy. The woman can obtain her immediate release by obeying the directions of the Court.

In reply to MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.),

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The whole matter rests in the discretion of the County Court Judge.

GOVERNMENT INSPECTORS AND CORONERS' INQUESTS.

MR. PICKARD (Yorkshire, W.R., Normanton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, at the inquest held on the body of J. W. Hoyland, on 26th April, at Wonsborough Bridge, who was killed at the Barrow Collieries, Yorkshire, after the evidence had been taken, and the room cleared for the jury to consider their verdict, the Government Inspector, Mr. Mellor, re-entered the room, and remained with the jury until they found their verdict, and which the foreman of the jury states greatly interfered with their proceedings; and whether he will state by what authority the Inspector re-entered and remained in the room, and what steps he purposes to take in the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I am informed that the Inspector entered the room for the purpose of obtaining his hat, that he interfered in no respect with the proceedings of the jury, and that he was wholly unconscious of even acting unwisely in entering the room.

THE PRISONER FRANCIS TULLY.

MR. O'KEEFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it is true that Francis Tully, a prisoner undergoing a sentence of 12 months' imprisonment under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act in Limerick Gaol, has, according to medical report, been attacked with catarrhal ophthalmia; and, considering he has already completed eight months of his sentence, if steps can be taken for his release, so that the progressive nature of his disorder may be stayed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that the Medical Officer states that this prisoner is under treatment for catarrhal ophthalmia; but that he is much improved. His condition does not appear such as to call for his discharge on the ground of ill-health.

INDIA—REGIMENTAL RELIEFS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the suggestion of the Finance Committee of 1886 (par. 14, p. 409, vol. II. Report), that the Home Authorities should send out, when the time came for arranging the next relief, 60 additional men to each regiment serving in India instead of three fresh regiments, as in 1885-6, was found practicable and carried out; and, if so, whether the anticipated saving of Rs.5,75,000 annually has been made?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST, Chatham): The suggestion has not been found practicable, and has, therefore, not been carried out.

SURVEYORS' CLERKS IN THE GENERAL POST OFFICE.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General how the surveyors' clerks in the General Post Office are now appointed; and if the system of examination is still non-competitive and elementary; and, if so, why the promise made by the late Mr. Fawcett on 28th March, 1884, has not been fulfilled?

*MR. RAIKES: The appointment of surveyors' clerk, when it becomes vacant, is announced to the Post Office Service generally; and from the candidates who offer themselves the Postmaster General, after considering the Reports of the superior officers, selects the one whom he considers to be the best qualified. The selection being from persons already in the Service, there is no special examination. Mr. Fawcett altered the conditions under which selections were made for temporary employment as surveyors' clerks;

and this alteration, which was in accordance with the promise he had made, had the effect of placing all persons on an equality in the matter of candidature.

THE CASHIER AT CHATHAM DOCKYARD.

MR. HERBERT GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the recent appointment of a cashier at Chatham Dockyard; whether it is true that the present cashier (a junior clerk) had only served some few months in the cashiers' department, whereas the senior clerk, over whose head he was appointed, had 41 years' service in that department; whether the senior clerk (Mr. E. W. Jeffreys) was strongly recommended for the post by the present Admiral Superintendent at Chatham Dockyard; and whether the circumstances had been brought to his notice before the appointment was sanctioned by the Admiralty?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: This appointment received my careful consideration before it was made. Mr. Ternan, the present cashier, has had 30 years' service at the Dockyards in the account offices under the Accountant General, of which time a few months were served by him in the cashiers' office, a branch of the Accountant General's Department. The senior clerk at Chatham has completed 41 years' service, and will soon, from age, be eligible for retirement; he was strongly recommended for the post in question, as was the case with all other candidates for the post. My approval of Mr. Ternan's appointment was not given without hesitation, nor until after personal consultation with the head of the Department, and after carefully weighing the comparative circumstances and merits of the clerks senior to him. I am satisfied that, in the interests of the public service, Mr. Ternan was the best qualified for this important post.

IRELAND—THE CURASS ESTATE.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has seen paragraphs in the Irish newspapers announcing that an amicable arrangement had been arrived at whereby the dispute between landlord and tenant on the Curass estate in county Cork had been settled; whether he is aware that this settlement has been applauded by the *Freeman's Journal* and the *Cork Examiner;* and, if there is any truth in the rumour that those acting for the tenants refused to complete the treaty of peace?

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the question, may I, as the representative of the constituency in which the estate is situated, ask him whether he is aware that the hitch has been occasioned by the action of the landlord in not adhering to his part of the agreement by refusing to include in the settlement 16 tenants out of the 36 concerned in the matter; and, further, is he aware that all 36 tenants were prepared to pay their rents last Friday, until the breach of faith by the landlord became known?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I can only say that that is not at all consistent with the accounts I have received in respect to what has taken place upon the estate. With regard to the question on the paper, I believe that the statement made in the first paragraph is accurate, and that the local newspaper mentioned pronounced the settlement to be one creditable to both sides. I greatly regret to have to add that the report which has reached my hon. Friend with regard to the breakdown of the settlement through the action of the tenants or their representatives appears to be true.

MR. FLYNN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman from what source he gets his information; and has he consulted any of the tenants in this matter, or the tenants' advisers, or the parties interested in bringing about the negotiations?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I get my information from many sources, and I do my best to give that information in a convenient form to the House.

H.M.S. *SULTAN.*

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he will reconsider Messieurs E. Bayhino and Company's last offer to raise the *Sultan* and tow her into Malta Dock for the

sum of £50,000 if they entirely succeed, or 40 per cent on the material saved in case of failure, or whether it will be more advantageous, the vessel having cost nearly a million of money, to blow up the decks and save the guns only?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: It is proposed to accept Messieurs Bayhino's modified offer on the following basis—namely—£50,000 if successful; if unsuccessful, that the value of the articles and stores salved by the company shall be assessed on survey by competent officials from Malta Dockyard, and 40 per cent on such value paid to the company. The first cost of the *Sultan*, exclusive of guns and ordnance stores, was £374,777, and the estimated value of these is £44,720. The estimated value of naval stores on board when the ship grounded is £10,000.

THE IRISH MAGISTRACY.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to the arrest of Mr. Philip O'Dea, of Gortree, for ploughing up his holding, whether there were two other Magistrates in Youghal when Mr. Caddell came to try O'Dea; if so, why was Mr. Caddell sent from Cork, a distance of 30 miles, to try this case; whether prisoners on remand are usually kept in the local bridewell; and if so, why was O'Dea sent to the county gaol at much expense and trouble; and whether it is a rule that solitary prisoners are never handcuffed on the way to gaol except they are notoriously bad characters; and, if so, why was this man handcuffed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I have already stated, in reply to a question put by the hon. Member for North Dublin, Colonel Caddell was the Resident Magistrate in temporary charge of Youghal district. It was his duty to attend. There are two local Justices of the Peace. I also explained on the same occasion that it was not competent to confine the man in the local bridewell, inasmuch as the period for which he was remanded exceeded three days. It is not a rule that solitary prisoners are not handcuffed. The police use their discretion, as they are responsible for the safe custody of prisoners. The Divisional Commissioner has no power to arrange for the attendance of local Justices. Considerable inconvenience might arise if a Magistrate were not available when required. It was, therefore, necessary to make arrangements for attendance of a Resident Magistrate.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Has Mr. Caddell to travel thirty miles in this case, while the Lord Chancellor removed Mr. John Bryne from the Commission of the Peace for travelling ten miles?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In the first place, I have to answer that there is no parallel between Resident Magistrates and the ordinary Magistrates in the particular respect about which I am asked; and in the second place, I have to point out that the hon. and learned Gentleman might have gathered from the tenour of my answer that Colonel Caddell did not travel thirty miles to attend this case.

MR. FLYNN: Did not the right hon. Gentleman say some time ago, in answer to a similar question, that it was the intention of the Government to give instructions that handcuffing was to be resorted to as seldom as possible, and only in cases of extreme necessity?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think I said anything about extreme necessity. What I think I said was that the police were perfectly aware of the general regulations laid down, and of the spirit in which they should be carried out, and that they should not, and did not, use handcuffs unless they were required.

THE TOWN COMMISSIONERS OF KINSALE.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has seen a copy of the correspondence between the Lord Chancellor of Ireland and the Town Commissioners of Kinsale in reference to the appointment of a Town Magistrate, under the provisions of the Towns Improvement Act, from amongst that body, in succession to Mr. H. T. Daunt; and whether, in view of the large increase of the population in the town during the fishing season, he will communicate with the Lord Chancellor, asking him to reconsider the question, and appoint a Town Magistrate to exercise a jurisdiction which has been exercised by a member of the Town Commissioners, acting as a Justice of the Peace, for many years past?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The matter referred to in this question is one entirely within the discretion of the Lord Chancellor. If the hon. Member or any other person interested in the matter think that there are circumstances in the case which render it proper to be reconsidered by the Lord Chancellor, their proper course is to communicate with the Lord Chancellor's Department.

HAYTI AND FRANCE.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College Division): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the published text of a treaty alleged to have been signed on the 6th inst. between the Governments of Hayti and France, in which, in return for a war subsidy, two men-of-war of the first class and other material assistance in suppressing the Haytian insurrection, the Haytian Government grant to French subjects and French vessels certain exclusive privileges in Hayti, and undertakes to admit French goods at 25 per cent less than the duties fixed by the Haytian Customs tariff; whether the version of the treaty published in the *New York Herald* of the 22nd inst. is substantially correct; and whether Great Britain possesses any commercial treaty with Hayti embodying the most favoured nation clause, and if so, whether Her Majesty's Government have taken any steps to secure for British commerce, in the event of the treaty being ratified, similar privileges to those conceded to France?

SIR J. FERGUSSON: As far as I can ascertain, no confirmation of the statement in the *New York Herald* has been received. Great Britain does not possess a commercial treaty with Hayti.

IRELAND—THE OLPHERT ESTATE.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland why, having regard to the circumstances of the Olphert estate, have the applications of 82 tenants on that estate to the Land Commissioners for the fixing of a fair rent, and which were received by the Land Commissioners before the 1st November, 1887, not yet been heard; when will the Land Commission Court sit for the hearing of those applications; and, what has been the reason for the delay in bringing matters in dispute between Mr. Olphert and his tenants to a judicial decision?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sorry I have not been able to get a Report in time to answer this question. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will be good enough to defer it.

REPORT OF THE SCOTCH FISHERY BOARD.

MR. ANGUS SUTHERLAND (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Scotland when he expects the annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland to be in the hands of Members?

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. MOIR T. STORMONTH DARLING, Edinburgh and Aberdeen Universities): I am informed that the Report will be laid on the Table of the House about the 1st of July, and will be in the hands of Members as soon as possible thereafter.

LAND REVENUES OF THE CROWN.

MR. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the purchase money of the Crown farm of Scrabster, in Caithness, which formed part of the property of the See of Caithness, and fell to the Crown on the final abolition of episcopacy in 1689, and which was sold by the Woods and Forests Department in 1883 for £30,000, has been appropriated for any Scottish purpose, and, if not, how has the money been disposed of?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. W. L. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The purchase money of the Crown farm of Scrabster, county Caithness was, in accordance with the directions of Parliament, applied to the same purpose as the purchase money of all other Crown properties in the United Kingdon—namely, it was added to the capital account of the land revenues of the Crown, which is invested in Consols, and from time to time laid out in the purchase for the Crown of real estate, or in the discharge of encumbrances charged upon the possessions and land revenues of the Crown in the United Kingdon.

IRELAND—DISHORNING CATTLE.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has

been drawn to the fact that the cattle of the Land Corporation on evicted farms on the Ponsonby estate, near Youghal, in the county of Cork, have been dishorned within the past week or two; and whether the police will be directed to prosecute in that case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the facts are substantially as stated in the first paragraph. They have so far received no evidence in the matter.

MR. CLANCY: Will they be instructed to try and obtain evidence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course.

RESIDENT MAGISTRATES.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether in a prosecution for trespass against the police, at Cloyne, in the county of Cork, on Tuesday last, Mr. Butler, R.M., was one of the presiding Magistrates; whether Mr. Butler has ever adjudicated in Cloyne before; and, if not, why he was summoned to sit on the Bench at Cloyne on the date referred to; and if he will state whether there are any rules regulating the attendance of Resident Magistrates at Petty Sessions in Ireland; and, if any, what the rules are?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not yet received a Report on this subject.

THE IRISH ESTATES OF LONDON COMPANIES.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that three of the London companies owning estates in the north of Ireland have recently sold those estates, under the Ashbourne Act, for a sum of money amounting in the aggregate to half a million of money; and whether the estates in question were granted to those public companies for Irish public purposes, and on condition that they should found schools and churches in Ireland, and develop the industries of that country; and, if so, whether the Government will take any steps to restrain the alienation of the money obtained for the property in question, and to secure that the money shall be applied to the promotion of industries and industrial education in Ulster or any other part of Ireland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have to say that if, as would appear from the question of the hon. Gentleman, the companies in question are under a legal obligation to continue these charities, I presume the matter will be tried in a Court of Law; but I have no information on the subject, nor have I any means of investigating the subject.

MR. CLANCY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in 1884 a Royal Commission reported on the subject; and is it no part of the duty of the Government to carry out the recommendations of a Royal Commission?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to the Committee proposed by the hon. Member to inquire into the subject?

MR. SEXTON: Is it true that the Purchase Commissioners have refused to ratify the sale of one of these estates—the Drapers' Company's estate—on the ground that ejectment proceedings were pending, and will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to lay on the Table a copy of the letter of the Purchase Commissioners refusing to ratify the sale?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no knowledge of the facts, nor are they at all germane to the question on the Paper. With regard to the question put by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), I am aware there is a Motion for a Committee to look into the subject, but it is for the House to determine whether the Committee shall be granted.

MR. CLANCY: The right hon. Gentleman has not noticed my question as to the Report of the Royal Commission of 1884.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I apologize to the hon. Gentleman. I was asked many questions at once. My attention has not been called to the Report, but I gather that the Government have no power given them to interfere with any action of the Purchase Commissioners in the matter.

MR. CLANCY: Surely the Government can introduce legislation on the matter.

HORSES FOR THE ARMY.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any assurance can be given that those owners of horses

who register a portion of their stock as available for military uses in a case of national emergency would be exempted from requisition as regards the remainder of their horses?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I am obliged to my hon. and gallant Friend for giving me an opportunity of explaining this matter. As it is impossible to foresee the degree of emergency which might arise, I cannot undertake to bind the Government of the day under all circumstances; but I can say generally that, after availing ourselves of the registered horses, the next requisitions of the War Office would fall, as a matter of equity, on those owners who had not had the patriotism to register; and we should certainly begin by exacting from them at least a proportion of their animals corresponding to the proportion accepted from those who have registered.

IRELAND—ARTERIAL DRAINAGE.

MR. PATRICK JOSEPH O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the promotion of arterial drainage in Ireland has been largely retarded owing to the action of landlords as "owners" withholding their "assent," on the grounds that the benefit would mainly accrue to the tenants in possession; and whether, to remedy this state of things, he will introduce into the new Drainage Bill such a clause, applying to the whole of Ireland, as will give to the occupiers the right (now vested in the owners alone) of assenting or dissenting to any drainage project?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the matters of fact alluded to in the first part of the question, I think the question should be asked of my hon. Friend the Secretary of the Treasury, as the matters are such as the Board of Works has to deal with. With regard to the second paragraph, I am of opinion that in the present state of Ireland it would be better that the whole advantage and responsibility should be transferred from the landlord to the tenant, and that is actually done by the Drainage Bills which I introduced last year, and which I propose to reintroduce substantially this year, but it would not be fair while leaving the incidence of the drainage rate unaltered that the body to ascertain whether the drainage works should be undertaken or not should be altered.

UNITED STATES MINISTER TO CHILI.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government of the United States advises Her Majesty's Government of changes and appointments of Ministers of the United States to foreign countries; and, if so, whether the Foreign Office have received official notification of the recent appointment of United States Minister to Chili?

SIR J. FERGUSSON: The answer to both of the hon. and learned Members' questions is in the negative.

IRELAND—LANDLORD COMBINATIONS.

MR. GILL (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that certain landlord combinations have been formed in England and Ireland, the effect of which has been to obstruct the peaceful settlement of disputes between certain Irish landlords and their tenants; whether it is true that an appeal has been issued by certain persons in England for money for the purpose of planting Protestants on farms in that country from which Catholics have been evicted; and whether, in view of the fact that such combinations and such appeals have had, in the past, results most disastrous to public peace and order, and have led to crime, the Government will take into consideration, with a view to a prosecution, the question whether the promoters and authors of those plans and schemes have brought themselves within the law of conspiracy?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no official cognizance or control over the matters referred to in the first and second paragraphs. I can see nothing blameworthy in an attempt to find new tenants for vacant lands, even though the new tenants are Protestants.

MR. CLANCY: Can the right hon. Gentleman see any harm in trying to arouse sectarian passions?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I see a great deal of harm in that; but I am not aware that there is anything in the proceedings alluded to which is likely to do so.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether an appointment has been made to the Governorship of Western Australia; and, if so, when the new Governor will assume office?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The appointment of a successor to Sir F. Napier Broome as Governor of Western Australia has not yet been made. It is at present proposed that the new Governor shall assume office about the end of this year.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will present Papers relating to the establishment of responsible government in Western Australia, so that the House may be in full possession of all the facts and correspondence before the Imperial Bill is introduced; and, whether he will include in those Papers a copy of the land regulations now in force in that colony?

BARON H. DE WORMS: In answer to my hon. Friend, I have to say that the correspondence is being printed, and will be presented very shortly. A copy of the Land Regulations, with a short explanatory memorandum, will be included.

THE TROOPING OF THE COLOURS

MR. BARTLEY (Islington): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that answers have not been returned this year to applications for tickets by Members of the House of Commons to witness the Trooping of the Colours at the Horse Guards; and, whether this action has been taken with his sanction?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I should like to take this opportunity of explaining that the ceremony of Trooping the Colours is a function of the Brigade of Guards, and is entirely under their own management. The Military Authorities at head-quarters have nothing to do with the issue of tickets. But I shall be very glad if some better arrangement may in future be practicable for the accommodation of Members of Parliament; and the matter shall be fully considered before next year.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—SAINT KATHERINE'S HOSPITAL.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Penrith whether an account is annually rendered to the Charity Commissioners of the income and expenditure of the Saint Katherine's Hospital in the Regent's Park; whether he can state what was the income for the past year, and give the details of the expenditure: and, whether any scheme for the reform of the hospital has been prepared by the Charity Commissioners, or any other authority; and, if so, when such scheme will be laid upon the Table of the House?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Penrith): An account, when audited, is annually rendered to the Charity Commissioners of the income and expenditure of St. Katherine's Hospital. The last accounts received are those for the year 1887. The receipts amounted to £7,337 2s. 8d. The expenditure was £9,293 4s. 6d. It would be impossible to give the details of the expenditure within the limits of an answer, but if the hon. Member will call at the office of the Charity Commissioners, he can see a copy of the accounts. No scheme has been prepared by the Charity Commissioners for the reform of the hospital or otherwise.

MR. CREMER: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that the Charity Commissioners have taken no steps to cause the accounts of the hospital to be audited, and that no audited account has been rendered to the Charity Commissioners since 1887; and, if so, may I ask whether the Commissioners are prepared to enforce the power which, I believe, is vested in them to compel the authorities of the hospital to render detailed accounts of the income and expenditure of the hospital?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER: A detailed account of the income and expenditure is annually sent to the Charity Commissioners, under the rules framed for the administration of the hospital. As the hon. Member is probably aware, the Charity Commissioners have no power of audit whatever. As a matter of fact, the accounts of St. Katherine's Hospital are audited.

MR. CREMER: Will the hon. Gentleman, on behalf of the Commissioners, undertake to lay on the Table of the House the last Return supplied to the

Charity Commissioners by the trustees of the hospital, so that the House may be in a position to judge as to the way in which the funds of the hospital are expended?

SIR J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): May I ask if the Charity Commissioners will take steps to meet the desire expressed in the House for a revised scheme of this charity, whose funds are very much abused at present?

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): May I ask if there is an independent scheme in preparation?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER: I am not aware whether any such scheme is in preparation or not. I can only answer for the schemes which are in preparation in the office of the Commissioners. If the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cremer) will place the terms of his Motion on the Paper, they will be considered by the Commissioners. The question of the hon. Baronet (Sir J. Goldsmid) ought rather to be addressed to the First Lord of the Treasury, because I do not think we have any power or authority to take such steps as the hon. Baronet proposes.

MR. CREMER: I beg to give notice that I shall move for a Return of the income and expenditure of the hospital in question.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the recent death of the Master of St. Katherine's Hospital, he will take such steps as may be necessary to secure that the recommendations of the Royal Commission of 1871 with regard to this institution shall be carried into effect, and the large revenues at the disposal of the hospital be made available for purposes of public usefulness?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): In 1878 Lord Chancellor Cairns, acting under a Warrant from the Queen, submitted certain rules for Her Majesty's approval. These rules were approved by the Queen, and Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to direct that a copy of them shall be laid before the House. I may add that Her Majesty, having decided that a large sum of money (being the surplus of the Women's Jubilee offering) should be devoted to the purpose of providing improved means of nursing the sick poor, the draft of a Royal Charter is now under the consideration of the Privy Council to incorporate a "Queen's Jubilee Institute for Nurses," to be located at and connected with St. Katherine's Hospital.

THE PRESUMPTION OF LIFE LIMITATION (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1881.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Scotland whether the Lord Advocate will introduce this Session a Bill to amend "The Presumption of Life Limitation (Scotland) Act, 1881?"

*MR. MOIR T. STORMONTH DARLING: In the present state of public business I am unable to give any undertaking as to the introduction of this Bill.

IRELAND—EVICTIONS IN DONEGAL.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what is the sum total of the rent due from the tenants about to be evicted; are the military in Falcarragh stationed partly in the workhouse in Dunfanaghy, which has been lent gratuitously to the Government by the Board of Guardians, of which Mr. Olphert is Chairman, and partly in Mr. Olphert's own house at Ballyconnell; and is Mr. Olphert paid by the Crown for the maintenance and lodging of the troops so billeted?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The total amount of rent due by the 14 tenants who were evicted on the 24th inst. was £109 1s. As already stated, the landlord had offered most liberal terms. Twenty-eight tenants were liable to be evicted. They owed rent to the amount of £201. The landlord offered to accept £60, or about one and a-quarter year's rent, or even less in the case of any tenant who might be unable to accept that offer. There are no military stationed in Falcarragh. They are quartered in Dunfanaghy Workhouse, which has been occupied rent-free by a resolution of the Guardians. Mr. Olphert is Chairman, but was not present at the passing of the resolution. There are no troops quartered at Ballyconnell.

MR. MAC NEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that on the 14th of this month the Secretary of State for War admitted to me that these troops

were lodged in Mr. Olphert's house, and that two of them were guests of Mr. Olphert.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That may have been the case, but it is not the case now.

MR. MAC NEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman inform us when the generous offer by Mr. Olphert to his tenants was made; was it before or after the eviction proceedings were taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe it was made before.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Has the Chief Secretary considered the cost to which the country is put by these proceedings, and whether any steps can be taken by the Government by which some compromise may be effected?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir; I think the amount of public expenditure involved in these cases is very lamentable, but the persons who are responsible for them are the persons who start the Plan of Campaign.

COUNTY COUNCILS.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether, in view of the grant to the Standing Joint Committee of powers respecting county police, contained in Section 9 (Sub-section 1), and Section 30 (Sub-sections 1 and 2) of "The Local Government Act, 1888," and especially in view of that portion of Section 30 of the Act, which sets out that "all such expenditure as the Joint Committee determine to be required . . . . shall be paid out of the county fund," as well as in view of Section 64 (Sub-section 3) and Section 65 (1), he will be good enough to state whether it is part of the duty of the Standing Joint Committee, under the Act, to determine from time to time what expenditure is required for repairs, improvements, building and rebuilding of police-stations, lock-up houses, or court houses; whether, to enable the Standing Joint Committee so to determine with accuracy, it is their duty to cause plans and estimates to be prepared for such works as they may deem necessary; and, whether, having so determined, it is their duty to carry out the works, and submit the account to the County Council for payment, or to require the County Council to carry out the work and pay for the same.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): The question put to me by the hon. Baronet is an abstract question of law, and it is difficult to express a definite opinion without knowledge of the circumstances arising in a particular case. I may say, however, that as I read the sections it is, in my opinion, the duty of the Joint Committee to determine what expenditure is required for repairs, improvements, building and rebuilding the police-stations, lock-up houses, or court-houses, and to superintend the carrying out of the work. The County Council has to provide for payment of the amount so expended. Assuming the Joint Committee to be acting in respect of a matter within their powers, I think they are the sole judges of what is necessary to be done, but the County Council would not be bound to provide money for purposes which are not within the jurisdiction of the Joint Committee.

IRELAND—THE QUINN CHARITY.

MR. W. REDMOND (in the absence of MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether he is aware that the late Mr. Henry Quinn, of Downhouse Terrace, Richmond, Surrey, deceased (who was originally a native of Newry), made his will, probate whereof with five codicils attached was granted to Mr. William Mathers Hepper, the executor therein named, on the 30th November, 1887, his assets, after deducting debts amounting to £240,123 10s. 8d., after the pecuniary legacies therein named, testator bequeathed all his residuary personal estate to his trustees "to be applied in and towards establishing a society, to be called the 'Quinn Charity,' and to be situate in Newry, in the counties of Down and Armagh, for the maintenance and support of such indigent persons, male and female, or male or female, re iding in that town or in the neighbourhood of 10 miles around, as may have formerly lived in a better or superior class of life, or carried on a respectable business, and subsequently became reduced in their pecuniary circumstances;" whether it is estimated that the residue will considerably exceed £200,000; and, why, whilst the

remainder of the estate has been practically administered, no substantial progress seems to have been made in carrying out the wishes of the testator in regard to this charity?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: The bequest the terms of which are correctly stated in the question is the subject of an administration action (*re* Quinn Hepper *v.* Attorney General) now pending in the Chancery Division. The plaintiff is the trustee of the will, and in his statement of claim alleges that the sum applicable for the Charity is about £145,000. A scheme will have to be settled, but this cannot be done until it has been ascertained who are the next-of-kin of the testator, and how much, if any, of the fund consists of impure personalty and is therefore inapplicable for charitable purposes. An inquiry as to the next of kin was directed by Mr. Justice North, on the 24th of November, 1888, and it is anticipated that this will be answered in a few weeks, when the Chief Clerk will be in a position to certify how much of the fund, if any, consists of impure personalty, and the matter will again come before the Judge, who will be asked to direct a scheme to be settled. The delay has been caused by the difficulty of ascertaining who, if any, were the next of kin.

THE VICE ROYALTY.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether his attention has been drawn to the virtually unanimous assent given to the scheme for transferring the administrative duties of the Lord Lieutenancy to a Secretary of State for Ireland, and of deputing its ceremonial duties to a Royal Prince, at the very representative meeting of Irish Peers and Members of Parliament held on Tuesday; and, whether Her Majesty's Government are now prepared to state to the House whether it is their intention to introduce any legislation on the subject?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Prime Minister has been asked and has consented to receive a deputation on the subject of the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, and I am unable, therefore, to give my hon. Friend any fuller answer than that I gave him on the 13th instant.

CRUELTY TO CHILDREN PREVENTION BILL.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the statement put forth by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in support of the Cruelty to Children Prevention Bill; whether he has observed the number and importance of the petitions presented to this House, several of them from Municipal Corporations, in favour of the Bill; and, whether, in consideration of the public interest excited, he will afford facility for the Committee stage of the Bill at a time when it cannot be blocked by the objection of a single Member.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government fully recognize the importance of the Bill for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; but the hon. Member must be aware how impossible it is for me to promise facilities to the Bill of any private Member, however much we may sympathize with its objects, until further and very considerable progress has been made with Supply.

MR. PICTON: Will the Government do all they can to forward the Bill when further progress has been made with Supply?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am very reluctant to give any pledge. It is in the power of the hon. Gentleman and his friends to put it in my power to give facilities for the Bill.

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.): Will any facilities be given to refer the Bill to a Select Committee?

MR. PICTON: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will use his influence to induce the hon. Member opposite to withdraw his opposition to the Bill.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think every hon. Member, in the discharge of his duty in this House, must be himself responsible for his action. I myself am of opinion that a Bill of this character should be referred to a Select Committee. It would be rash to make any promise at present, but I hope it will be put into a shape in which it will be accepted by the House.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): The Bill passed a Second Reading two months ago, but I was only asked to refer it to a Select Committee last Monday; I am afraid if it were now

referred to a Select Committee with power to take evidence, it would not be passed till next Session. If, however, the right hon. Gentleman will promise it shall be passed this Session, I will agree to the suggestion that it be referred to a Select Committee.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I cannot undertake in advance to make a promise of that character.

MR. MUNDELLA: As the Bill stands it has first claim on the House on the first Wednesday after Whitsuntide. I shall put it down for that day and trust to the Committee of the whole House dealing with it then.

THE DISTRICT COUNCILS BILL.

MR. FRANCIS STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is still the intention of the Government to introduce and press forward the District Council Bill during the present Session?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have nothing further to add to the statements I have already made on this subject, but the hon. Member will see for himself that it is out of my power to give any pledges until further progress has been made with the measures already before the House and with Supply.

SOCIALIST MEETINGS.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that a meeting being held on the 21st instant at Garden Row, Southwark, under the auspices of the Southwark Branch of the Social Democratic Federation, was suppressed by the police; whether, upon the police being informed that religious meetings were allowed to be held without interruption on the same spot, they replied that their orders were to suppress socialist meetings only; whether such orders have been given; and, whether he will state to the House generally what orders have been issued to the police with regard to the suppression of public meetings?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that socialist meetings were formerly held at Garden Row, Southwark, but were complained of by the inhabitants, and were therefore discontinued. On the 21st instant there was a renewal of obstruction, when the police interfered, and informed those holding the meeting that it could not be allowed to proceed. The police had not interfered with the so-called religious meetings, which consist of a few people standing outside a mission hall in Garden Row, because no obstruction is caused, and no complaint has been made. The police did not say that their orders were to suppress socialist meetings only. No such orders had been given. The police exercise the strictest impartiality as to the nature of any meetings. The only orders they have are to deal with meetings by whomsoever held which infringe upon the public right of free passage in the streets.

MR. CREMER: Has the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary any objection to stating by whom complaints were, as he has informed us, made of the holding of meetings in Garden Row?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have not the information here, but I will make inquiries.

H.M.S. *VICTORIA.*

MR. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if it be true that, during a recent visit of several Admiralty officials to the *Victoria*, at Chatham, on the occasion of hoisting on board her 110-ton gun, a very serious defect was discovered in the construction of the vessel, which is no less than that between the torpedo store-rooms, in which the guncotton charges are stored, and the water, there is only a thin skin of seven-eighths of a inch iron, without double bottom or lining, and that, unless a bulkhead of some kind is put up, this must constitute a very weak point, both in this ship and the *Sanspareil*, which is like her, and whether, if a bulkhead be put up, it will lessen the space in the store-room to such an extent as to prevent the ship from carrying anything like an adequate number of these missiles?

LORD G. HAMILTON: The torpedo store-rooms of the *Victoria* have been built as provided for in the designs. At the lower corner and at a depth of about 20 feet below the water-line, the outer bottom plating is the only steel partition separating the store-room space from the water. The construction in this case is not unusual, nor does it

constitute an objectionably weak point. No bulkhead is to be put up in this space, and no alteration of storage made.

THE FIRE BRIGADE REVIEW.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): I beg to ask the Home Secretary why there was not a sufficient force of police present on Saturday afternoon to maintain order at the review of the Fire Brigade by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales?

MR. MATTHEWS: The police had no part in making the arrangements or issuing the tickets for that ceremony, which was arranged by the Fire Brigade Committee of the London County Council, who arranged that the Queen's Westminster Volunteers should keep the ground, and that the police should render the same assistance which they were accustomed to do at the ceremony of trooping the colours—namely, regulating the traffic in the approaches to the ground and assisting in the rear of the Volunteers. The number of police was sufficient for police purposes, but was not sufficient to keep clear the large space of ground on which it was contemplated the review would take place. When the superintendent in charge found the ground was not being kept he very wisely sent to Scotland Yard for reinforcements, but the adjoining divisions had been weakened by the heavy duties which fell upon them in the early part of the day, it being the Queen's birthday. Although every available man was sent and the crowd got safely out of the parade, there was not force enough present to prevent crowding and inconvenience to their Royal Highnesses and the spectators, which I very deeply regret.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield Central): May I with permission ask hon. Members to defer their judgment on the matter until I have had an opportunity of making a statement to the London County Council, which will meet to-morrow? I ask my right hon. Friend whether he will lay on the Table of the House his letter of May 11th to the Chief Commissioner of Police, which, I believe, has been submitted to my right hon. Friend, asking that due police arrangements should be made for the preservation of order, and also for the regulation of the traffic between Storey's Gate and Marlborough Gate? I also ask what reserve force there was at Scotland Yard, and who was the officer in charge of the police?

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary whether he has any authority whatever for saying that the Fire Brigade Committee of the London County Council expressed any desire for the absence of the police?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I am not aware that I have said that the Committee expressed any desire for the absence of the police. The communication of May 11th was in these terms:—

"The Queen's Westminster Volunteers will keep the ground, and the ceremony, which will last about 20 minutes, shall be of as military a character as can be arranged. The London County Council propose to issue tickets as in the case of trooping colours on the Queen's Birthday, and the Fire Brigade Committee desire that the Metropolitan Police under your instructions should aid in keeping the ground for the parade and in preserving order."

After that a meeting was held between the Chairman of the Committee and the Commanding Officer of the Fire Brigade and one of the Chief Constables of Police, and at that meeting the arrangement was made that the ground was to be kept by the Volunteers, and that the police should aid in keeping order, and the Police Orders were in accordance with that arrangement. There was a force of 242 police of all ranks upon the ground.

MR. VINCENT: I must ask whether there is any precedent whatever for imposing upon the Volunteers the duty of clearing the public off a given space, whether that duty does not always fall upon the police, and whether there is not a precedent to that effect during the Jubilee, when the police invariably cleared the ground?

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): May I ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the name of the Officer Commanding the Volunteers on this occasion, and whether he will see on any similar occasion in future that the Volunteers are placed under the command of an officer capable of commanding them.

No answer was returned.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I wish to ask the right hon.

Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now able to make any communication with respect to the future course of business during the week, and particularly with regard to the discussion on the Report of the Foreign Office Vote in Supply, and the discussion on bi-metallism, which has been set down for Tuesday in next week, but which I hardly think can be disposed of on that occasion?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: The arrangement for to-night was the conclusion of the debate on the Second Reading of the Scotch Local Government Bills, Nos. 1 and 2. To-morrow it is proposed, I believe with the assent of the right hon. Gentleman himself, that the Vote on account of the Civil Services should be first taken at two o'clock, and the Report on the Foreign Office Vote immediately afterwards. With regard to the business on Thursday, I shall postpone making any statement until to-morrow. With regard to the discussion on bi-metallism, it is not in my power to give any better opportunity than the evening of Tuesday, June 4th; therefore if it is not concluded on that occasion it must be adjourned to a future day.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Considering the time the Government have devoted to Supply, I think we may reasonably hope that the Vote on account may be taken without debate, but if that hope should be disappointed I do not think that the discussion on the Foreign Office Vote, with the various matters which it involves, can possibly be disposed of in the remainder of a morning sitting.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I wish to echo the hope of the right hon. Gentleman. I think it would be reasonable that the Government should get the Vote on account without debate, and I hope, under the circumstances, that the House will afford sufficient time for the discussion of the Foreign Office Vote. I cannot at the present moment make any other arrangement.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON VACCINATION.

Mr. PICTON: Will the President of the Local Government Board state to the House the names of the Royal Commissioners to be appointed to inquire into the working of the Vaccination Acts?

*Mr. RITCHIE: The following will be the Members of the Royal Commission on Vaccination:—Lord Herschell, Chairman; Sir J. Paget, Sir C. Dalrymple, M.P.; Sir W. G. Hunter, M.P., Sir E. Galsworthy, Chairman of the Metropolitan Asylums Board; Mr. Savory, President of the Royal College of Surgeons; Mr. Bradlaugh, M.P., Dr. Bristowe, Dr. Collins, Mr. Dugdale, M.P., Professor Michael Foster, Secretary of the Royal Society; Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson; Mr. Picton, M.P., Mr. Whitbread, M.P., and Mr. Meadows White, Q.C.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON AND THE POSTMASTER GENERAL.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I wish to ask the indulgence of the House, Sir, for one or two minutes while making a personal explanation. It is in the knowledge of the House that I have given special attention to the question of postal and telegraphic communication in various parts of the Empire, and that I have asked a large number of questions on the subject, none of them of a trivial character, while I have succeeded in exposing a large number of abuses. Indeed, I have saved the Government some tens of thousands of pounds, and I have often been complimented from the Front Bench, except by one right hon. Gentleman. I am perfectly well able to take care of myself. But I beg to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether it is for the honour and dignity of the House that the other evening the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General was called a "right hon. booby," and that this evening the Postmaster General should refer to hon. Members of this House very pointedly as "advertising politicians." I wish to ask whether any of those expressions are in order?

The SPEAKER: The personal expression which the hon. Member alluded to was never made in my hearing, so far as I am aware; it was not made when I was in the Chair.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: No, Sir; you were not in the Chair.

The SPEAKER: Then it is impossible for me to give any opinion upon it. The hon. Member asks me also as to whether a particular answer was in order. In my opinion the bounds of order were not overstepped. Sometimes there is a little feeling thrown into a question, and sometimes a little irrita-

tion is infused into an answer; but so long as the bounds of order are not overstepped it is not for me to interfere.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY BANQUETS.

MR. T. HEALY (Longford, N.): I wish to ask a question affecting the privileges of the House. I notice that a dinner was given in this House on Saturday, at which three Judges were invited to dine by the Home Secretary, and that one of the guests asked to meet these gentlemen was Sir Rowland Blennerhassett, a person implicated in the Pigott forgeries, and as having supplied money to defame the character of Members of this House. The three Judges I refer to were the Judges who are engaged in trying these forgeries, and I wish to ask whether there is any protection to be given to Members of this House against the use of the precincts of the House, or buildings connected therewith, by Gentlemen in the position of the Home Secretary, when such invitations are calculated apparently and made with the object of offending other Members of the House. I have to ask who it is that has control over the precincts of the House?

MR. SPEAKER: I have no control over gentlemen who come to dinner within the precincts of the House, nor does it in any way appertain to my office to place any restrictions upon them, or to express any opinion whatever as to who the guests may be on any particular occasion.

IRELAND—EVICTIONS IN DONEGAL.

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I desire to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland a question of which I have not given him private notice. It is whether the hon. Member for Fulham was present by his authority superintending the operation of the battering-ram in Donegal?

MR. BALFOUR: The hon. Member for Fulham is not under my orders.

MR. P. O'BRIEN: When I applied to the hon. Member for Fulham to use his influence to allow me in the police circle I addressed him as the representative of the Chief Secretary, and he did not deny that he was then in that capacity.

THE LUGGACURRAN EVICTIONS.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Cork Co., N.E.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary whether it is true that he has ordered the forces of the Crown to be used to carry out evictions at Luggacurren to-morrow?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information on the subject. If the hon. Gentleman will put a question on the Paper I will answer it.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: I have a telegram in my hand:—"Evictions coming on certain to-morrow morning." Am I to understand that the right hon. Gentleman, who is responsible for the government of Ireland, is not aware that the Government are to-morrow undertaking the depopulation of a district five square miles in extent?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman never asked me about the population or the area; he asked me about using the forces of the Crown. Of course, the forces of the Crown will be used if they are required; but I have no special information that they will be required.

MOTIONS.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN, Member for the North-Eastern Division of the County of Cork, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the injustice of employing the forces of the Crown in carrying out the impending clearances on the Luggacurran Estate in Ireland.

MR. SPEAKER: As a point of order, it is my duty to point out that there is a Motion on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham: "To call attention to recent and impending evictions in Ireland, and move a Resolution," and that is a very general description indeed. If, however, I were to apply the rule very strictly it would prevent the hon. Member from bringing forward his Motion; but in the circumstances, and looking to the urgent character the hon. Member has stated, I only indicate that as circumscribing the discussion and confining it to the particular point.

The pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen:—

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Sir, I am obliged to you for your liberal construction of the rule, because I hope to assure you that it is a matter of very serious and melancholy importance and urgency to which I invite the attention of the House. If it were only an isolated event I should not trouble the House, but it is part of a deliberate policy which the Government are adopting in Ireland, and which will have far reaching consequences so far as the peace of Ireland is concerned. It is a part of a regular policy of vengeance and of a policy of plantation which the Government are falling back upon in consequence of the utter failure and breakdown of the Coercion Act. I will not waste words in arguing how utter that breakdown has been; time will, and indeed has, shown that. But I do want the House to understand the course which the Government are now entering upon in Ireland, for they are committing themselves to a course which is unjust, and whichwill prove calamitous to the best interests of Ireland. The facts are within a very small compass, and I will tell them as briefly as I can. I do not want the House to accept any *ex parte* statement from me or from any other man. The tenants on the Luggercurran property may rest their case on the action of this House alone, and on the action of the agent to the estate, Mr. Townshend French, and I think I can satisfy any fair-minded man that by the terms of the Land Act passed by this Parliament itself the position of the Luggercurran tenants is impregnably justified, as the land agent has confessed out of his own mouth. There were two classes of tenants on this estate when this unhappy dispute arose—the judicial and the non-judicial. The non-judicial tenants first claimed an abatement of 30 per cent in the autumn of 1886. They were afterwards willing to settle at 20 per cent, which I will show you was the very figure agreed upon by Mr. French's own arbitrator. Yet Mr. French repudiated his own arbitrator's terms, and men owing only half a year's rent besides the hanging gales were thrown out. Had the Land Act of 1887 been passed at that time, they would have been entitled to this reduction. The reductions on all the surrounding estates have ranged from 25 to 45 per cent and averaged 30 per cent. It cannot be denied that these men are in the right. You have to admit that they were willing to accept 20 per cent, which was considerably less than they would be entitled to under the Act, and yet, though your own Act declares they were in the right, and Mr. French's own arbitrator declares they were in the right, they are to-morrow to be flung out upon the roadside and are to be destroyed, simply and solely because they stood faithfully by their neighbours and tenants, and because all your powers under the Coercion Act, all your arrests, and all your bayonets, have not been able to intimidate these men to desert their fellows. The only shred of apology which I ever heard offered by Lord Lansdowne was that two large tenants, one paying £1,300 and the other £800 a year, allowed themselves to be evicted. It is not argued that their claim for an abatement is not every bit as just and necessary as that of the small tenants; but because they are large tenants, and because they are not reduced to utter pauperism and beggary, they are evicted. These two men, the only two strong men on that estate who can be described as men of wealth, are constantly paraded before the British public as fair specimens of the men we are dealing with, and it is said that the tenants of Luggacurran are a rich, thriving lot of fellows; and it is actually made a charge against these two men that, indeed, because they are not utter paupers they have had the bravery and the unselfishness of allowing themselves to be evicted from their comfortable homes rather than desert their poorer neighbours. Their action, instead of deserving cowardly taunts, seems to me to be the most powerful argument that could be adduced in support of their case. Does the House suppose that these two men, paying these large sums, would march out of their residences, see their happy homes turned into barracks for emergency men and for the army which the Government are sending to destroy these poor people—do you suppose that they would face all that misery

and loss if there were not a most desperate necessity? Do you suppose that nobody in Ireland who is not an utter pauper is to have any justice at all? I remember hearing Mr. Dunn undertake to show from his own books that he had lost £500 on his place during the past five years, and is he to go on paying an oppressive rent until he is as great a pauper as his neighbours, and is finally flung out without a penny of compensation? I protest against these two solitary men on this estate being paraded constantly before the British people as specimens of the rest, and until, at all events, the right hon. Gentleman, the Chief Secretary, can show their claim is not a perfectly just and moderate claim, I say immortal credit to these men who stand by their neighbours, and do not allow Mr. Trench to crush the poor, wretched, and small tenants as he might easily have done if once he had Mr. Dunn's £1,300 and Mr. Kilbride's £800 in his pocket. As to all the rest of that estate, the landlord's whole action was as cruel, as indefensible a wrong as ever was perpetrated under the British flag. Let me say a word about the judicial tenants, who are the poorest and the most wretched of the lot. Their rents were fixed in the very worst year—namely, 1883—as to which the Land Act of 1887 became necessary. What is the case of these judicial tenants? I do not know whether the hon. Member for South Tyrone is here.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Yes.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Very well, I hope he is listening and will answer me. The whole dispute on this estate arose as to the abatements of these judicial rents. The tenants claimed 20 per cent, and they were willing to have accepted 15 per cent, which was the very figure agreed on by Mr. Trench's friend, Mr. Denning; but Lord Lansdowne said "No; not one shilling of abatement on the judicial rents." I invite the hon. Member for South Tyrone to say whether Lord Lansdowne was right in saying this. If he was right, your Government was wrong. Two or three months afterwards he changed his view about judicial rents, in consequence of the struggle of these poor wretches. He changed his view and he said to Lord Lansdowne, "Yes; but you will have to give an abatement on the judicial rents." A compulsory reduction of 13 per cent, or 2 per cent less than the tenants were willing to receive, was given by the wretched schedules of the Land Act of 1887. The Government said, "You must give 13 per cent." But before these reductions came the poorest of these poor tenants had been picked out and evicted. You are to-morrow going to destroy the rest of them as far as you can, simply and solely because you could not induce them to desert these poor evicted tenants. I have explained the position of these men, and I want to know who is going to dispute the facts I have brought forward. Let me now say what these men have done for peace's sake. They were right from the beginning, but have they been unreasonable in their conduct? From the beginning these men have not shirked arbitration or any fair overture. Will the House believe that the men, who are to be exterminated to-morrow, on two separate occasions entered into negotiations with two gentlemen, one representing himself and the other being a friend and an intermediary of Mr. Trench, that they accepted the terms which these two gentlemen pronounced reasonable, and that the reward of their acceptance and reasonableness was that it was taken to be a sign of weakness and surrender, and these two treaties of peace were in the most shameful manner repudiated and broken by the landlord? The first attempt to arrange terms was at an interview at Maryborough appointed by Mr. Denning, and the following heads of agreement were arrived at: (1) The judicial leaseholders who had been refused any abatement and who had demanded 20 per cent were to be content with 15, and the non-judicial tenants who had asked 30 per cent were to be satisfied with 20; (2) the evicted tenants were to be reinstated; (3) no costs were to be paid by the tenants; (4) non-judicial leaseholders were to have their leases broken and to enter the Land Court. Mr. Dunning intimated his desire, which was respected, that it should not be made known that Lord Lansdowne was to bear all the costs. So far all seemed to be fair and above board. I and my friends immediately despatched a telegram to Mr. Dunning to say that these terms were accepted. This telegram

was sent at eight o'clock on Saturday morning. But no reply was received from either Mr. Dunning or Mr. Trench on the Saturday, Sunday, or Monday. On Tuesday morning an astonishing letter was received which ignored all the terms of agreement which had been settled, made no reference to the costs, passed by the re-instatement of the evicted tenants without a word, and simply stated that the landlord would be willing to allow the tenants to go into the Land Courts. This was the first of the shady transactions of Lord Lansdowne's representatives. Mr. Dunning never attempted to deny that he had agreed to the four heads of settlement which I have enumerated to the House. I and my friends had foregone our visit to Canada in the hope that there would be no necessity to see Lord Lansdowne on the subject. After keeping us waiting for four days Mr. Trench and Mr. Dunning simply backed out of the agreement which had been entered into on behalf of Lord Lansdowne. We therefore had to go to Canada after all in order to lay before the Canadian people, who paid Lord Lansdowne £10,000 a year, the facts of this dispute. If the hon. Member for South Tyrone or anybody else wants to follow him to this ground, all I can say is that he has only to grant a tribunal of three Judges to go across to Canada to inquire into "Lansdowneism and Crime," and I will undertake to give him murderous speeches, murderous incitements to violence, and plenty of murderous deeds as well, that will make the speeches of "Scrab" Nally and "Dr." Tully's Pills harmless pleasantries indeed. I can do that without forged letters. I can do it from the authentic reports of Lord Lansdowne's own speeches, and those of Mr. Goldwin Smith, and a great many other highly sensitive moralists, who take a very different view of assassination when it is an Irish Nationalist in question. But I do not want to go into that. I will only say that the only argument Lord Lansdowne ever uttered for himself in the course of that visit was the argument of revolver shots and paving stones fired in the dark——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I think the hon. Gentleman is now travelling out of the immediate subject before the House, which has nothing to do with what took place in Canada.

MR. O'BRIEN: Very well, Mr. Speaker. I am sensible that I have perhaps gone too far. The next proposal made on behalf of Lord Lansdowne was that these people should make a haul out of the British Treasury to the extent of 22 years' purchase. Had they been so unscrupulous as to accept this proposition, they would have been in their homes now. They would not accept it. But the tenants were unwilling to abandon all hope of compromise, and in August terms of settlement were put down in writing which, it seemed probable, would be carried into effect. These were, that the evicted tenants should be reinstated; that the non-judical tenants should have fair rents fixed, and that the judical tenants should receive an abatement of 13 per cent. The only point of difference was the amount of present payment. Mr. Trench required a full year's rent to be paid down. The representatives of the tenants said that this was impossible; but did not despair of coming to terms. They accordingly offered to split the difference, and by hook or crook to find six months' rent. The landlord's own agent had previously admitted that it was impossible for the tenants to pay a whole year's rent. Still, it was now declared, on the part of the landlord, that the payment of a whole year was a *sine quâ non*. The result is that for this question of a half-year's rent to-morrow morning an eviction party is going to clear out every man and woman in the whole valley, and to make it more deserted than the Valley of Glencoe. That is the position. You have already evicted half of these people on grounds that I defy you to justify, and you are going to evict the remainder because they refuse to condone this crime or to betray the other tenants. You cannot deny this. I defy you to go before any Court; I defy you to meet us in the face of any tribunal. Refer the matter to arbitration, or to any Land Court in the country, and I defy you to displace a single fact I have mentioned to-night. I may here say that I have mentioned nothing *ex parte*, nothing only on the tenants' side. I appeal to the decisions given under your own Land Act, which justifies the tenants. I appeal to the decrees of the Land Commissioners, right or wrong, and I appeal to the admissions under their own hands of the

two gentlemen Mr. French employed as friends and intermediaries, and in that case you can test the English people, or we ourselves will test them, and will meet you there. With regard to Mr. Trench I would remind you that he is the gentleman in whose interests you are sending out an army to clear a whole country side bare of its inhabitants to-morrow. Take the character given of him by Mr. Thomas Hussey before the Parnell Commission on his oath. He told a pleasant little story of Mr. Trench. Mr. Trench said to him, "How does it happen, Hussey; how on earth is it that you have not got shot long ago?" "Nothing could be simpler," said Mr. Hussey, "they have been warned that if they shoot me you will be their agent." This is the Gentleman in whose battle the British flag is to be unfurled to-morrow. He has been again nibbling for a settlement within the last few days; after two former betrayals he is again showing the white flag, by pretending he is in favour of arbitration, and it is only to-night that I heard that, just as before, this is all a sham, and that the tenants are going to be turned out to-morrow. We will trust him no more. We will have no more of his backstairs shuffling and truckling. Let him come out into the open daylight to make any proposals he has to make. Let him refer the matter to a Court of Arbitration or to any Land Court he likes, and let him give up the notion of making victims and examples. The one crime of these tenants is simply and solely that they are right. They forced you to pass the Act of 1887, and they were right. Let any honest proposal be made and we will meet those who make it. Let them put these men in the same position as that in which they would have been if the Land Act had not been passed before these evictions. But I promise you they will not do that; they will only fall back on their battering rams and Resident Magistrates. Your weakness and our strength is in this—that we are right and you are wrong. We are ready to fight you before any tribunal, but you dare not fight us; you prefer the Resident Magistrates and the battering ram. But I can tell you that you will have to face a tribunal before many years, and possibly before many months are over. Your septennial Acts will not save you always. I defy you to show that these men are not in the right. I can tell you that these are regarded as the champions and soldiers of the Irish cause, and so long as there is a spark of gratitude in the Irish heart these men will never be deserted. We are longing for peace, we are anxious, we are pining for peace. We want peace for ourselves, for our country, aye, and for this Empire; and every friendly overture for peace or friendship — aye, the overture of the Archbishop of Dublin, which was as large and generous as ever any man made—has been spurned and actually construed as a sign of weakness and surrender. All I can say is that we will have no more parleying of this sort. Let Messieurs the assassins begin; we will meet them, month after month, or year after year, with your policy of vengeance. Yes, I think I hear the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, fasten on that expression. He will probably dish it up at some future time for the Parnell Commission; but the right hon. Gentleman well knows that the policy of vengeance I speak of is not our policy of vengeance, for in all the world there is not a more forgiving people than the people of Ireland. No, it is the policy of vengeance of the Government I allude to. We will meet you on that policy month after month and year after year until the General Election. It will come some time. You may decimate these unfortunate people and have the district bare of inhabitants; but what I say is that I hope we shall live to meet you on this issue before the English people, and then, in spite of all your force and wealth and clumsiness and forgeries, I believe the verdict of the English people will be one that will yet replace these tenants in their homes again—people who are hard-working, industrious, and kindly hearted, but whom—every man, woman, and child—you are turning out upon the world. I have now to move that the House do now adjourn, in order to give the Government an opportunity of telling us what is their apology for the deeds they are going to do.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. William O'Brien.*)

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (South Tyrone): The hon. Gentleman who has just

spoken has once or twice pointedly referred to me; I do not know for what reason. I never saw Lord Lansdowne in my life, and I never saw his agent but once; but I have been on his estate, and I will take up one or two points the hon. Gentleman has referred to. I will, however, only deal with facts and not with rhetoric. The hon. Member stated that Mr. Dunn and Mr. Kilbride were practically the only tenants who were strong and able men on the estate. Mr. Kilbride himself has stated that "The Luggacurran evictions differed from most of the other evictions to this extent, that they were able to pay their rents. It was a fight of intelligence against intelligence: it was diamond cut diamond."

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that when that speech was made Mr. Kilbride and Mr. Dunn were the only two evicted tenants, and that Mr. Kilbride spoke for those two, and for those two only?

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: He was speaking of the Luggacurran tenants generally, and unquestionably Mr. Kilbride was right. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. O'Brien) has said that the Act of 1887 did for those tenants what the Campaigners wanted to be done. I believe that when that Act was passed it did not touch the rents of 1886, because this House refused to touch or interfere with the judicial rents legally due in 1886. What is the reply to that fact, because it is one that cannot be gainsaid?

MR. W. O'BRIEN: There were no rents fixed in 1886.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Act gave no reduction on the rents of 1886; they were expressly left out. The hon. Member has said that these evictions were a part of the deliberate policy of the Government. I do not know anything about what is the deliberate policy of the Government, but I do know that they were the inevitable results of the Plan of Campaign. I want the House to consider what is the actual position of those who adopt this Plan of Campaign. I am very sorry that such a state of affairs should prevail on any estate in Ireland, and I should be glad to see these estates settled. I am perfectly free to say that, and I am stating what, at all events, is the conviction of my heart when I say I should be glad to see these estates settled. But what is the legal position of these tenants under the Plan of Campaign? They first of all refuse to pay the rent they had contracted to pay. It does not matter whether the contract was under the Land Act or in the old way by private arrangement; it makes no difference whether the rents were judicial or not; they decline to pay them, and their demand is to vary the contract at pleasure. I do not care whether it was a contract made by the Land Commission or one made by themselves. Their demand is simply to vary that contract at pleasure, and unless they get a settlement on their own terms they will accept no settlement. What is the legal position of these tenants? The Act of 1870 practically said to the Irish landlord, you have a tenant who has invested capital in his holding, and until now all his improvements have been in law your property. The Act declared that it should be so no longer. What that Act further declared was this: that if the failed to pay his rent, and the landlord wanted to evict afterwards, the tenant could claim every farthing of improvement that he could legally prove. I have investigated cases where money has been actually paid under the Act of 1870. The Act of 1881 went further. It said to the tenant, "when you receive notice of eviction, you are at liberty to sell the interest which has been legally recognized in your holding." What the Campaign tenant does is this: He refuses to pay his rent, he receives notice of eviction, and he declines to take advantage of the Act of 1870 or the Act of 1881. He simply sits still and keeps a firm grip of his holding; he holds that which everybody will admit is not his own, and refuses to avail himself of the Acts passed for the very purpose of protecting him. I defy any hon. Member of this House to say I have misstated either the purpose or the actual working of the Acts of 1870 and 1881. And so long as the tenants hold that which is the landlord's and refuse to avail themselves of the machinery which this House has placed at their disposal for recovering that which is actually theirs, then I say no Government that has any respect for the foundations of organized society can refuse to turn these people out of their holdings. That is the whole position of the Plan of

Campaign tenants. I went over that Luggacurran estate. The hon. Member for North-East Cork says there are only two classes of tenants; he will pardon me if I call his attention to a third. The road from Maryborough to Luggacurran is entirely occupied by the farms of Protestants. Everyone of these men have paid their rents and settled with Lord Landsdowne. Will the hon. Member for North-East Cork inquire into that fact?

MR. W. O'BRIEN: I never inquire whether a man is a Protestant or a Catholic.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Hon. Members below the Gangway are great friends of religious toleration; but when it is the case of a scripture reader in Galway they know how to treat him. It was the large farmers who were then evicted. These were the men who Mr. Kilbride declared were able to pay their rent. It was a case of intelligence against intelligence —of diamond cut diamond. The upland evictions take place to-morrow. I have been over these uplands, and have gone from house to house. The hon. Member for North-East Cork talks about flying visits. All I know is, that I visited a considerable number of tenants on the uplands of the estate. I spoke to one old man who held two farms, one from Mr. Cosby, the other from Lord Lansdowne. He confessed to me that he had paid Mr. Cosby, for whom Mr. Trench is also the agent, and when asked why he had not paid Lord Lansdowne, he burst into a fit of laughter at the absurdity of the idea that he was unable to pay. It is on the uplands that the evictions will take place to-morrow, if they are to take place at all. Lord Lansdowne has come to a settlement with the Athy portion of his tenants under the Ashbourne Act; he has received his rent from the Maryborough tenants; he has evicted the large farmers round Luggacurran and turned the land into a ranche; and now the conspiracy is to be met on the uplands. I do not know whether Lord Lansdowne has done right in refusing arbitration or not. [Mr. T. M. HEALY: Why do you not say it?] I know nothing of it. I accept no *ex parte* statement of that case. I know a little too much about Ireland to accept any *ex parte* statement. The hon. Member for North-East Cork talks about the original willingness of the tenants to come to terms. I think he said the non-judicial tenants would have settled for 15 or 20 per cent; but a demand for 30 per cent was made. The original demand in Queen's County was that Lord Lansdowne's tenants should be treated in precisely the same way as the small tenants in Kerry. Lord Lansdowne refused to bow to that demand.

MR. O'BRIEN: Does the hon. Gentleman for one instant deny that the judicial tenants never claimed more than 20 per cent?

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: What I assert is that the demand of the large tenants was that they should be treated the same as the small tenants in Kerry were treated. No doubt they came down in their demand. Does the hon. Member for North-East Cork mean to tell us that the tenants were willing to settle at 20 per cent?

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Most distinctly, if the judicial tenant got 15 per cent.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I have the list of evicted men before me, and an offer was made to every one of them individually and separately of reductions varying from 10 to 20 per cent; and what it comes to is this, that for a miserable 5 or 7 per cent, and perhaps for some ulterior purpose of the gentlemen who conduct the Plan of Campaign, they insisted that the battle shall be fought out to the bitter end. Lord Lansdowne, I maintain, practically conceded the demand, and that he stood behind the verdict of this House when he refused to give a reduction of the judicial rents. This House absolutely declined to touch the rents due in 1886. I know no more about the Luggacurran estate or the Luggacurran people than a visitor of two or three days. But that is more probable than most Members of this House know. I am not sure whether the hon. Member for North East Cork had much more than a three days' experience. I know he made use of one of the days to advise the people of Maryborough to make it impossible for Mr. Trench in future to drive through Queen's County without an escort. He does not use this language here. I say that the man who stood up and told those people in the market square or wherever it was—I am not sure whether it was not one of those champagne lunches which are so very common under the Plan of Campaign—that they ought not to allow Mr.

Townsend Trench to make the boast any longer, has very small title to be heard in this House on this subject.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: A word of expianation on this subject. In reference to the imputation which the hon. Member has made upon me, these are the facts: It came to my knowledge that Mr. Townsend Trench was going from house to house, and offering the tenants bribes to desert their neighbours, and I told them that if he was to come, let him come openly and manfully, and not come sneaking around. I thoroughly understand the motive with which the hon. Member introduced that incident.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester): Mr. Speaker, the Resolution which you read out from the Chair, that this House adjourn, was based on the objection of the hon. Gentleman who moved the adjournment to the use of troops to-morrow in carrying out certain evictions on the Lansdowne property. That was the subject of his Motion, and his speech appeared to be but very remotely connected with it. The main purport of that speech was to villify, as far as I could make out, a particular individual—namely, the Governor General of India. He accused him of not merely being a brutal and harsh landlord, but also of being a man who, in his negotiations with his tenants, was little better than a trickster. The present Governor General of India is known to many men on both sides of the House, and I would defy any man who knows him to get up on either side of the House and say that Lord Lansdowne is otherwise than the most humane of gentlemen, and a man absolutely incapable in any transaction of life, be that transaction what it may, of dealing otherwise than in a straightforward and honourable manner with those with whom he has affairs. The hon. Member alluded to his progress through Canada, and to the speeches which the then Governor General of Canada, Lord Lansdowne, made. He said those speeches were incitements to murder, and he actually drew a parallel between Lord Lansdowne and the Editor of *United Ireland*. But I would point out to the House that all this elaborate account of the transactions on the Lansdowne property is not relevant to the Motion put from the Chair. What does it matter with regard to the evictions to-morrow what happened last year or two years ago between the Member for Cork and Lord Lansdowne? Of course, Sir, it is impossible for me, not having had notice of this Motion until I came down to the House at half-past three this afternoon, and not having in my office such full and authentic details as with time I should have been able to get of these transactions, to follow the hon. Member step by step through so long an indictment. But though that indictment was couched in the most violent language—[MR. O'BRIEN: Not half as violent as your bayonets will be]—the hon. Member does not, I hope, do me the injustice to suppose that I object to his violent language. Though couched in the most violent language, I was not able to collect even from the version of the facts presented by the hon. Gentlemen, that the indictment had any substantial foundation. The accusation appears to me to be so far as I can make it out that there has been a breach of faith on the part of the landlord, that terms were distinctly offered by Lord Lansdowne's agent, and that afterwards they were repudiated by the landlord. But I do not gather that the agent authorised the terms that were suggested by Mr Dunning in the first instance.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: No, but he most distinctly stated that he came as a friend of Mr. Trench, and an intermediary, and this was never repudiated.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: And it is on this uncertain ground that Lord Lansdowne is accused of breach of faith, because a gentleman comes forward as friendly to the tenants and the agent—

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Certainly not to the tenants.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: And suggests certain terms—terms which he was never probably authorized to make at all, and thereupon in the most violent, vehement, and almost unparliamentary language the landlord is denounced for having broken faith with his tenants. If this is a specimen of the controversial method of the hon. Gentleman opposite, I do not think it is necessary to deal further with his arguments. Much has been said about the terms offered to the tenants, and as I have told the House, I am not in a position to give a full report on the matter, but as soon as I heard that the adjournment was about to be moved in

order to bring forward this subject I telegraphed the Under Secretary in Ireland, and received in reply the following telegram :—

"Some 30 tenants to be evicted to-morrow. They owe on an average three and a half years' rent. Tenants demand 35 per cent., subsequently modified to 30 per cent. reduction on non-judicial rents, and 25 per cent. on judicial rents. Landlord offers 20 per cent. on non-judicial rents, and no abatement on judicial rents beyond abatements given in the schedule —which is 13 per cent. Landlord also offered to stay evictions if one year's rent and costs are paid, and to give time for remainder. Nine of the tenants have judicial rents fixed."

The others have not judicial rents, they have never, I understand, been to the Court.

"The Plan of Campaign was adopted Nov., 1886, and since then the tenants who originally refused have accepted the landlord's terms, and paid their rent. There is no doubt of the ability of every one of the tenants about to be evicted to pay their rent."

I have read my information in the telegraphic form I received it. How does that harmonize with the statement of the hon. Member for North-East Cork? On non-judicial rents the landlord offers 20 per cent reduction. The tenants ask 30 per cent, and on judicial rents 25 per cent.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: No; certainly not.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member's statement and information are at variance with mine; he says the tenants offer to pay with 15 per cent reduction on the judicial rent. Perhaps further inquiry will make this discrepancy clear. At all events this appears certain, that the landlord, who was represented as a brutal and a perfidious tyrant, is prepared to stay evictions if one year's rent and costs are paid. Now I say on the face of it, the offer of the landlord is a generous offer, and when we bear in mind his action towards his Kerry tenants, where there was no conspiracy against payment of rent, we shall require no further proof that if there is a hard landlord in Ireland, that landlord is certainly not Lord Lansdowne. Then the hon. Gentleman draws an appalling picture of vast areas to be cleared, and makes a comparison between what is being done at Luggacurran and what was done two centuries ago in the Palatinate. Now it appears to carry out this clearance only 30 tenants are to be evicted to-morrow. ("Only.") It may be a serious thing to evict 30 tenants, I am not disputing that, but the hon. Gentleman described the situation without giving the figures to the House, and without the figures the hon. Gentleman's statement is certainly misleading. I think my hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Russell), in the observations he has just made, hit the nail on the head when he said the real point in dispute was who was to fix the rent of those holdings. The hon. Gentleman who moved the adjournment laid down the most extraordinary and preposterous theories with regard to land tenure. He said the tenants were absolutely justified in all they have done—that is to say, in adopting an illegal conspiracy, in boycotting, in withholding rents which they could pay, in remaining occupants of land which did not belong to them and of which they could pay the rents, that they are justified in doing all those things, because in their own opinion and in that of the hon. Member for Cork their rent is too high. I say that is a preposterous doctrine not to be defended by any responsible Statesman. The hon. Gentleman has declaimed on the particular hardships of the leaseholders. The particular hardships of the leaseholders were relieved by the present Government, and that is now used as a basis for the argument that, because it might have been right in 1887 to allow the leaseholders to go into the Land Court, every rent which accrued prior to 1887 ought to be revised, and cannot justly be exacted from the leaseholders. Why, no one with any kind of fixed principles can accept the statement that, because a Court thought that certain tenants should receive favourable consideration in one year, therefore the reductions must be made retrospective over all previous years. The whole doctrine is preposterous and absurd. Leaving leaseholders, we come to the case of tenants, who have been into Court. Now, surely if this House is capable of legislating for the tenants in any way, it proved that capacity by carrying out the Act of 1881, but to say that by change of circumstances, by alteration in prices, or in demand for agricultural produce, or by any other causes, these tenants are justified in entering into illegal combinations not to pay

rents fixed under the Act of 1881, is a proposition I absolutely deny, and which, if admitted, would shatter the whole land system in Ireland. But a large number of tenants hold neither under leases nor as judicial tenants. What case has the hon. Member made for these men? Why did not those clients of the hon. Gentleman refer their disputes to the Court? Had they gone into the Court they could have applied for a stay of eviction, and the Court would certainly have granted it on fair terms. Therefore, I say that these men are absolutely without even the shadow or shred of an excuse which might be urged in favour of the tenants who hold their lands under leases, or who have had their rents fixed in '83 by the Court. The fact that the hon. Gentleman never urged those tenants to set the proper tribunal in motion shows that at the time he started the Plan of Campaign he had not that regard the judicial tribunals to which he is now so anxious to refer the dispute.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to say on my honour I never heard of the Plan of Campaign or the Lansdowne Estate until after it was adopted by the tenants.

* MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Though I am glad to apologise to the hon. Gentleman for any mistake I may have made on that point, his explanation does not touch my argument. Whoever started the Plan of Campaign, the hon. Gentleman never used his influence to induce the tenants to go into Court and get their rents fixed by the proper tribunal. My argument stands, and the responsibility of the hon. Gentleman is not materially diminished. The hon. Gentleman has dwelt in strong terms on the sufferings of the tenants on this estate. I admit the sufferings of the tenants, and if I read aright the signs of the times those sufferings are not likely to be diminished. The hon. Gentleman has attempted to fasten the responsibility for this suffering upon Lord Lansdowne in his speech, but in his Motion he attempted to fix the responsibility upon Her Majesty's Government, who sent the forces of the Crown to carry out those evictions. But I say that the responsibility rests entirely upon the hon. Gentleman himself and upon his friends. If these men are turned out of their houses it is the hon. Member who has turned them out. If these men are deprived of improvements which they have made in their holdings it is the hon. Gentleman who has deprived them. If these men are sent to live in campaign huts on the meagre pittance allowed them by the Land League, it is the hon. Gentleman who has sent them there. On his head, and on the heads of his friends, and on their heads alone, rests the responsibility for the sufferings now going on on the Lansdowne Estate, and which I fear will be repeated in other parts of Ireland. But the course the Government have to pursue in this matter is perfectly clear. I am certain that if I saw to-morrow my place filled by one of the right hon. Gentlemen now sitting opposite he could not in one single particular vary the policy which the Government have to pursue. Would any right hon. Gentleman on the Opposition of the House take upon himself to render nugatory the decrees of a Court because he happened to think that in a dispute about a certain percentage of rent the landlord would have been well advised to give easier terms. The policy the Government are carrying out —that is to lend the forces of the Crown to support the officers of the law—has been the invariable policy of every Irish Government, and if there is to be anything like government in Ireland it must still continue to be the policy of every Government. I do not believe that if you gave Home Rule to-morrow an Irish Parliament would dare permanently to refuse its support to the authority of the law. If it did, all I can say is that the disorganization which under the auspices of the hon. Gentleman has fastened upon certain parts of the country would become universal. Chaos would succeed to order, and anarchy would succeed to law. If it is the opinion of any hon. Gentleman, in whatever quarter of the House he may sit, that the prosperity of Ireland or of any other country can be pursued by such methods and obtained by such a policy, all I can say is that I look forward with the darkest forebodings to the future of that country whenever its destinies shall come under their control.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): The right hon. Gentleman says if he were followed in office by any Gentleman on

the Front Opposition Bench, his successor could make no change in the administration of these affairs in Ireland. Now, it is not for me to answer for what right hon. Gentlemen on that Bench might do in certain contingencies, but I may refer to what was done by his predecessor in the office of Chief Secretary, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, and to a remarkable letter that right hon. Gentleman wrote in reference to some celebrated evictions, and also to a phrase he used which has since become historical, that he would exercise upon landlords about to evict tenants "every pressure within the law." If the Chief Secretary is correct in what he says, why is it that we have not had evictions on the Clanricarde Estate? If nothing can be done for the Luggacurran tenants except to proceed to-morrow to a vigorous enforcement of the law, why was this vigorous enforcement not pursued against all the tenants on the Olphert Estate? Why is it that the very telegram the right hon. Gentleman read from the Under Secretary differentiates between the ability or non-ability of the tenants to pay rents? What business has the Government to know this, or to make inquiry into this, if, according to the theory of the Chief Secretary, the Executive have no option but to give the Sheriff protection in carrying out the process of law? How do the Castle officials find out that a man can pay? By irregular and furtive methods of inquiry, and all we ask is that you should substitute for this irregular and furtive method an open, fair and candid investigation, not by some sergeant of police, but by one of Her Majesty's Judges. You obtain your information through informers, pimps and eavesdroppers. You send your police to make inquiries, and a good deal depends on the tone of mind of the man you apply whether he is of the capacity of the hon. Member for Fulham (Mr. Fisher), or the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). If you have but to see the law carried out, what need have we of witnesses? Why did Lord Salisbury send over to Ireland as "a fresh eye," General Buller? What need of witnesses on the spot if the principle laid down is accepted, that assistance must be given to carry out evictions simply because it is the law? What about the Member for Fulham's expedition, what about the inquiry of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, and what about the "fresh eye," as Lord Salisbury called it, of General Buller? The right hon. Gentleman talked with a sneer of the rhetoric of my hon. Friend, but my hon. Friend in his most brilliant moments never reached the height of the right hon. Gentleman's peroration in realizing the terrible results from interfering with the process of law. But the Government themselves are differentiating in the matter of ability or non-ability to pay, as was shown by the right hon. Gentleman's statement on Friday with reference to the Glasserhoo tenants, that "not a single person would be evicted who could not pay his rent." Therefore, the person who is tampering with the law, and proud of it, is the Chief Secretary himself, and the anarchy we may look forward to with such dire forebodings has been inhaled by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. Passing from this, I would ask the House whether, from a Unionist point of view, the right hon. Gentleman addressed himself to the consideration of this subject in the calm-minded manner hon. Gentlemen opposite desire. He says that Lord Lansdowne made a most generous offer to his tenants, who, he says, owe three and a-half years' rent. Now, let us first consider what these terms are. Bear in mind some 39 families have already been evicted, and this is part of the "clearance of five square miles," which, I may mention, is an expression originating with Mr. Trench, not with my hon. Friend. The evictions to-morrow will complete the devastation over five square miles. The offer made by the landlord is that he will stay evictions if the tenants will pay a year's rent and costs, which I suppose would be about £10 or £15 each, and abandon to their fate the 39 evicted families, the victims of Mr. Trench now living in campaign tents on the miserable pittance allowed by the League. And this the right hon. Gentleman describes as a generous offer. Now, I ask, is that the way hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway would speak of these matters to a meeting of their constituents, after their constituents had heard the facts stated as they have been stated here to-night?

We are told that the generosity of Lord Lansdowne consists in this, that he is willing to take one year's rent though three and a-half years' rent is due. But although three and a half years' rent is due nominally, it is not due by these men as tenants; their tenancies were determined under the 7th Section of the Act of 1886, and they could only work their farms in an illegitimate manner, with the constant fear of a visit from the police and arrest for illegal assembly, to be followed by the experience of tenants at Youghal, who were dragged handcuffed to gaol, and a suitable Magistrate was brought 30 miles to try them. These men do not owe three half-year's rent. There is only one particular half-year's rent in dispute—at least, so I am informed by my hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork. Our great grievance is that this House understands nothing whatever about the matter. The hon. Member for South Tyrone says that Parliament has already decided not to touch the rents of 1886. It did nothing of the kind. What it decided was that it would not touch the judicial rents fixed in 1886 or after 1885, which is a totally different thing. If that is all the knowledge the hon. Member for South Tyrone possesses in regard to an Act which he himself assisted to pass, we cannot expect much knowledge from him as to the Act of 1870. In my opinion, a paternal Government, instead of involving the Empire in the movement of large bodies of troops—almost as large as those you sent the other day to put down Osman Digna—and even assuming, for the moment, that the tenants are wrong, and that the landlord has some right on his side, would have acted wisely if they had shown that they cared something for a people for whom—to use the words of General Buller—the law has never done anything, and who regard the National League as their only salvation. There may be some right on the landlord's side and some wrong on that of the tenants, but the amount in dispute is trifling, and the best course would be to appoint a Board of Conciliation, so as to put it beyond "yea" and "nay" what the Irish Executive think of this dispute. Nothing is more amusing to those who have had to deal with Courts of Law in Ireland than to hear how their action is spoken of here. The Chief Secretary says that these men might have gone into Court under the equitable provisions of the Act of 1881, and if they were going to be evicted before their cases were decided they might, under the 13th Section, obtain a stay of eviction. Well, tenants have gone before the Court, but one of the Judges said that the Act of 1881 was a new Act, and that there was a much older Act—Magna Charta—which provided that the law should not be delayed, and that every creditor should have a right against his debtor. I challenge the Solicitor General for Ireland to contradict what I have stated. The Court has the power to stay eviction, but it will never exercise it. As long as you trust the administration of the law to men of the landlord class, who hate the people, and regard tenants as things that are merely huntable, so long will the written law of Parliament never become the spoken law of the Bench in Ireland. From some things which have been thrown out by the Irish Government at various times, I did have some hope that, on an occasion of this kind, we might see a little ray of light, but I have been deceived. The case of the Luggacurran tenants is the case of Ireland. There are hundreds of such cases throughout the country; and that being so, we expected some other answer from the Chief Secretary than that those who have had dealings with Lord Lansdowne know him to be one of the best and most generous of men. Lord Lansdowne may be good and generous in his private capacity, but we know nothing of him except in his public capacity, and we know that he has for his agent a battering rammer who, at the same time, is distinguished in Merrion Hall for his invitations to the people to go there and be saved. Mr. Trench repudiates Mr. Dunning, and the Chief Secretary supports the repudiation. But suppose the tenants had said to Mr. Dunning, "We refuse to deal with you because you have not shown us your appointment under seal; where are your parchments?" the right hon. Gentleman would then have turned round and said that Mr. Dunning was sent by Lord Lansdowne, but the tenants pretended not to believe him. Surely it is absurd to suppose that one man would intervene in the affairs of another unless he had been requested to do so.

Mr. Trench set all the negotiations of Mr. Dunning at naught; and I can only say that a gentleman like Lord Lansdowne, who could allow a man like Mr. Dunning to go about in his name and then repudiate all that he did, fully deserves all the epithets my hon. Friend has used in regard to him. And what is to be the upshot of all this? When is it going to end? Are things always to go on as at present? You say you must put down the state of affairs which exists at Luggacurran. Lord Lansdowne has estates in Wiltshire. Why are the tenants there not evicted? Is it because they are Protestants? If there are Protestants who keep themselves aloof from the rest, they always receive better terms than any part of the community, and if they have paid their rents I should like to be told what reduction they have received. I should like to see the estate ledger in regard to Protestant tenants who have taken the place of Roman Catholics on the estate. How much rent do they pay? I warn the House that these new Protestant tenants who have been set down upon the plantations are the merest decoy ducks; they will never pay their rents, and will never be called upon to pay them; and if to-morrow Lord Lansdowne succeeds in getting ten or a dozen, or even 200 or 300, tenants of this class to take the place of the men he is evicting, and receives a garrison from the Chief Secretary to protect them, he will never get a shilling of rent. But, let us assume that the tenants have made an extreme demand, and that the landlord has more right on his side than the tenants. All that we do is to invite the House to step in between both parties and relieve the right hon. Gentleman of an unpleasant duty by establishing a Board of Conciliation, which will have the effect of healing the differences which now exist over the length and breadth of Ireland. I am altogether opposed to arbitration on particular estates; we have had enough of piecemeal legislation. I do not believe in making a settlement on the Vandaleur estate while the sore is kept open at Luggacurran. I would have war along the whole line or peace along the whole line. It is in the interests of the tenants and of the State, to put a stop to the expenditure of thousands of pounds in military, police, and Resident Magistrates, that you should appoint a Board whose decisions shall be respected. If you persist in carrying out these evictions in Ireland, you will require as many troops as would enable you to carry on one of your little wars in Egypt or elsewhere. I think we ought to insist upon treating Ireland as a whole, and I believe the time is fast coming when the Irish Land Question as a whole will have to be dealt with by Her Majesty's Government. Individual settlements are a mistake and piecemeal settlements are a mistake. What the Government ought to do is to appoint a Board of Conciliation, with a view of pacifying Ireland as a whole and putting a stop to the wretched system which is now going on.

Mr. William Henry Smith rose in his place and claimed to move "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Speaker withheld his consent and declined then to put that Question.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I was unable to take a full note of the contents of the telegram read by the Chief Secretary from the Under Secretary. As I understand, there is no statement in it as to a future reduction of rents to any of the tenants. Some of my hon. Friends think that the landlord has offered to make a reduction of 20 per cent on the future rents of non-judicial tenants, and some of us are of opinion that the compromise is confined to the acceptance of a year's rent and the payment of costs. Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to read the telegram again?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR did so, and added: It seems to be quite clear that the reduction is retrospective; but it is not clear whether it is also to be prospective.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: The landlord offers to give the reduction in the schedule of the judicial rents, which is 13 per cent. Two years ago the tenants offered to pay if 15 per cent were given, so that the difference between Lord Lansdowne and his tenantry is only 2 per cent, and it is for this 2 per cent that the struggle has been maintained and that the landlord wants to throw the whole costs of a litigation on the tenants, for which he is solely responsible.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, if the hon. Gentleman makes that state-

ment on his own account, I do not wish to interrupt him; but if he infers it from my telegram, I may remind the hon. Member that the demand of the tenants was not for 15 per cent, but 25 per cent on the judicial rents.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I do not think that the right hon. Gentleman could have paid sufficient attention to the statement of my hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork, who was one of the negotiators in this matter, and who has stated that the offer of the tenants in writing two years ago was to take 15 per cent. The only counter assertion is given on the faith of a telegram from the Under Secretary. The House is therefore entitled to take it that the tenants would pay with 15 per cent reduction and that the landlord offered 13. Is the right hon. Gentleman willing to throw the whole country into confusion for so small a matter as this? Lord Lansdowne does not offer to do anything whatever with regard to the tenants already evicted. An essential element in any combination is that the members of such combination shall stand by each other. If there were a labour struggle in this country, what would be said of the members of a Trades Union who went out on strike, if they accepted terms from the employers, one of the fundamental conditions of which was that a certain number of those on strike were to be excluded from the benefit of the settlement? Every Trades Unionist in the country would denounce, and rightly denounce, the men who so acted as traitors to their own interests and their own order, and the same judgment would be passed on these Luggacurran tenants if they agreed to accept salvation for themselves at the sacrifice of their companions in the struggle. The right hon. Gentleman closed his speech with an apologia. He says that if the law is not carried out in Ireland chaos will come. But what is it that he himself is doing? According to the telegram, it appears that he and his Government are willing to keep troops there to carry out evictions because they are convinced that the tenants are able to pay. That involves the counter proposition that if they were not convinced of the ability of the tenants to pay, they would not be prepared to lend the assistance of the troops. The position is altogether inconsistent with the action of the Chief Secretary in other cases, and I wish to know what is the nature of the distinction he desires to draw?

MR. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I know nothing of this case except what I have heard in the course of the debate. I do not, therefore, intend to attempt to deliver a final judgment upon it, especially as, in my opinion, the case has not been cleared up in many of the most material points. I wish to set out clearly several of the points in regard to which it appears to me further explanation from the Government is requisite, and to express my regret that any intimation should have been given by the First Lord of the Treasury of an intention on his part before these explanations have been afforded to shorten this debate. The points are these. In listening to the narrative of the hon. Member for East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) it appeared to me that one material question was the position of Mr. Dunning. According to the statement of the hon. Member for East Cork, this gentleman had power to act on behalf of Mr. Trench, Lord Lansdowne's agent, and had arrived at terms which the tenants were ready to accept as a basis of equitable arrangement. But it appears also that Mr. Dunning was thrown over or repudiated, and the proceedings went on without reference to what he had said or done. The Secretary of State for Ireland, with his usual courage, denied that Mr. Dunning was authorized by Lord Lansdowne.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; what I said was that I had no distinct knowledge of the facts, but that as far as I could disengage the facts from the statement of the hon. Gentleman, Mr. Dunning was not authorized by Lord Lansdowne, and in that I gather I was not contradicted.

MR. GLADSTONE: I believe I quoted the words of the right hon. Gentleman with absolute accuracy, and I own I was astonished at the boldness with which the right hon. Gentleman took upon himself to deny that Mr. Dunning was authorized. I do not presume to say whether he was or not, but I think the point requires to be dealt with. Mr. Dunning was a friend and coadjutor of Mr. Trench in matters

in which that gentleman was deeply interested. That, in itself, entitled Mr. Dunning to be listened to with credit when he appeared before the tenants and said he was authorized by Mr. Trench to offer terms. He did make peace professions, he did examine the case, he did offer terms. Though those terms we are told have been repudiated, it has never been denied that Mr. Dunning was authorized by Mr. Trench to undertake those proceedings. That is a matter which it appears to me for the honour of the parties engaged should be cleared up, either on the present or on some future occasion. Another point on which the right hon. Gentleman dealt with great confidence was that in the case of a tenant under notice of eviction, it was his own fault if he did not avail himself of the remedy which the Act of 1881 affords him, and apply to the Court that the proceedings might be stayed on reasonable terms. But the hon. and learned Member for North Longford has replied that there is no basis whatever for that allegation of the right hon. Gentleman, as the Court has declined to give the remedy under the 13th Section of the Act of 1881, and has fallen back upon the broader principles of an ancient enactment, so that the section of the Act of 1881 is neutralized and, in fact, annihilated in regard to its bearing on the tenant. If the allegations of the Member for North Longford are correct they strike at the whole basis of the argument of the Chief Secretary, and yet these allegations the Government propose coolly to pass by and to move the closure of the debate. There is another point which requires notice from the Government. The statement of the hon. Member (Mr. O'Brien) was that Lord Lansdowne declared in 1886 that he would make no abatement on the judicial rents; but the person who appears to stand in the front rank on this occasion is not Lord Lansdowne, nor Mr. Trench, but Her Majesty's Government, because if Lord Lansdowne declared in 1886 that he would not give an abatement on judicial rents he was doing nothing but sustaining the allegation made by Lord Salisbury and almost every Member of his Cabinet that to touch judicial rents would be immoral. Therefore upon Her Majesty's Government, and not upon Lord Lansdowne, the responsibility rests for whatever mischief may have arisen out of that doctrine and whatever misery the tenants may have suffered in consequence. I will not enter into the question of the telegram which has been read by the right hon. Gentleman, the contents of which he stated, I think, with perfect fairness. It is quite evident that the allegations of the telegram are totally at variance with those of the hon. Member for East Cork. Nor do I know how to dispose of the differences between them; that might be a reason for postponing the discussion, but it is no reason for its being extinguished. References have been made in this debate to the proceedings of the predecessor of the present Chief Secretary (Sir M. Hicks Beach); and the Member for North Longford has not unnaturally alluded both to the action and the language followed and used by the right hon. Gentleman when he filled the difficult office of Chief Secretary, and succeeding in establishing between the Irish Executive Government and the National feeling of the country a relation very different from that which now, unhappily, prevails. It is impossible not to see that there was very great force and significance in the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman that the Government intended to exercise in these cases pressure upon the landlords within the limits of the law. I cannot but express my regret that there was not in the speech of the Chief Secretary the smallest indication of an intention or desire to use that mediating influence of the Government that might be of the utmost value for allaying difficulties where they had arisen; and I hope the Government will declare that they will be glad wherever an opening appears to exist and wherever difficulties are threatened to act in the spirit of the declaration of the President of the Board of Trade, and use their influence and, in a certain sense, their authority for taking whatever steps may be likely to allay these differences and to bring the parties together, and thereby to prevent the recurrence of scenes which, unhappily, have become most painfully frequent—frequent, I think almost beyond all former example—and thereby contribute somewhat to that pacification of Ireland and to that restoration of law and order which we are told is the

object the Government have most at heart.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I wish to interpose for a moment between the House and the termination of the debate, in consequence of what I may not unfairly describe as the challenge the right hon. Gentleman has thrown out to the Treasury Bench as regards the right of the tenants to resort to the Court for a stay of proceedings. The section to which reference has been made is contained in the Act of 1881, which was passed by the right hon. Gentleman himself. The right hon Gentleman was in office until 1885, and yet it appears that from the passing of the Act until 1885, he remained in contented ignorance on the important point as to whether the section had or had not been rendered nugatory by the decisions of the Irish Courts. I am quite aware of the decision referred to, and I can state that it had not the effect which has been ascribed to it. In this matter there are two elements to be considered, there is not merely the right given to the tenant under the Act of 1881, but there is the right antecedently possessed by the landlord as a creditor. [*Ironical cheers.*] Certainly, the equities of the case must be decided by the Court as between an adjustment of the two rights. Will the right hon. Gentleman opposite say that the position of the landlord as a creditor is to be ignored? Of course, you must fairly and reasonable adjust matters between the tenant who has obtained a statutory right, and the landlord who before the Act was passed was master of the position. It has been said that the tenants cannot avail themselves of the benefits of this clause in the Act of 1881, but as a matter of fact the tenants have availed themselves of the provisions of the section, and have reaped substantial benefits from the protection which it affords them. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian has said that the real blame for refusing to deal with judicial rents is to be laid on the shoulders of the noble Lord who referred to the immorality of interfering with judicial rents. Is this to be taken as applying to action which might voluntarily be taken by the owner of the rents in entering into arrangements with his tenants? The two matters appear to me to be entirely distinct.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): I am sorry I cannot agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman that the section of the Act of 1881 would have been at all sufficient, judging even from those tenants who could benefit under that Act. If there is one part of the Act of 1881 which has proved more deficient than another it is the section authorizing the stay of the proceedings to which the hon. and learned Gentleman refers—in fact, it was owing to the inefficiency of this very section of the Act of 1881, that when the Arrears Act was passed special sections had to be drafted for the purpose of enabling tenants to obtain that stay of proceedings which the section of the Act of 1881 entirely failed to enable them to obtain. Of course those sections in the Arrears Act were only temporary, and are ineffectual for the purpose of the Luggacurran tenants. But, even supposing that the section of the Act of 1881 had been an efficient one, how does the hon. and learned Gentleman appeal to the existence of the section in the present case? The case with which we are dealing is to a considerable extent a question of leaseholders who could not benefit under the Act of 1881. What is the use of telling tenants who could not benefit by it, who have no power under the Act, to apply to stay proceedings of ejectment, having at the time no hope before them, nothing but Lord Salisbury's declaration refusing to extend the Act? Why, the argument appears to be childish and absurd to the last degree. These tenants being leaseholders, it would have been entirely useless to apply under the section. What use would a stay of proceedings, if they had been able to obtain it, have been to them? That stay must have expired some time or other, and at the end of that time they would have had, still staring them in the face, the necessity for the payment of the old unreduced rents. The fault does not rest with the Luggacurran tenants. It rests with the Government. If any hope had been held out to these men, matters would never have gone to extremes. They never would have formed themselves

into the Plan of Campaign, which, although it appears to hon. Gentlemen opposite a heinous organization, simply consists of the development of the principle that the strong shall stand by the weak. They never would have been driven into a position contrary to the law, and the blame rests, not on them, but on Lord Salisbury's declaration, which told them there was to be no alteration in the judicial rents, and that the Act of 1881 was not to be extended. The fault was shared by this House when it refused to pass the Tenants Relief Bill of 1886, which would have admitted these and other tenants to the benefits of this Act. I ask, is it too late to stop this miserable business? My hon. Friend has shown that he and every one representing the tenants were willing to come to terms with their landlord; that before they were evicted they were willing to pay their rents, less the small reduction of 15 or 20 per cent. My hon. Friend has not been irreconcilable, nor has he made exaggerated demands in this case. He has always been willing—the tenants have always been willing—to make arrangements. The blame does not rest upon them. The blame of the evictions to-morrow is not the result of the Plan of Campaign. It is the result of the action of this House in 1886, and the refusal of the Government in 1887, when the Act was passing, to make retrospective provision with regard to evicted tenants—a matter which I urged on them at the time. It is not, then, the tenants' fault or the fault of the friends of the tenants. It is the fault of this House and the fault of the agent of Lord Lansdowne, who since the passing of the Act has persistently refused every offer or suggestion of compromise. But let not the Government or Lord Lansdowne suppose that they are going to be allowed to crush these people. They have forced the Act of 1887 from you by their struggles and their sufferings, and it is to the shame of the House that it has to admit that all such legislation has to be forced from it by the sufferings and sacrifices of poor people; and the Irish people would be ungrateful if they allowed these people to suffer or allowed them to be exterminated by the Government, or refused to provide them with abundant succour. These poor men, with their wives and families, who are going to suffer, may be cheered by the declaration—and I hope they will be cheered—I desire to be made to-night, that we will not see them suffer; that in any case, whether under the Plan of Campaign or without any plan, where the tenants have shown themselves to be reasonable and moderate in their demands, and desirous of nothing more than to avail themselves of the legislation which this House has provided for them, and where that benefit has been refused to them by the action, whether of the landlord or the Government, we will help them to resist and bear up against this oppression to the utmost extent of our resources.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 162; Noes, 208.—(Div. List, No. 127.)

COLONIZATION.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Select Committee on Colonization do consist of 17 Members."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Campbell-Bannerman be a Member of the said Committee."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I do not of course raise any objection to the name of my right hon. Friend, but I wish to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it would not be well if the Committee were strengthened by the addition of the names of Gentlemen who have had considerable experience of Colonial affairs, if, for instance, the nominations included the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Sir J. Fergusson), who has twice served as a Colonial Governor; also the hon. Members for Canterbury (Mr. Henniker Heaton), and for the Kirkdale Division (Sir G. Baden-Powell). Each of these has had considerable experience in relation to the subject with which the Committee will deal.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I admit the qualifications of the Gentleman mentioned to serve on the Committee, but we have taken some trouble to nominate those who are specially interested in the subject, and though we

could not include all whose services might be desirable, I think we have selected a strong Committee. My right hon. Friend alludes to my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and no doubt he would be a very valuable Member, but in composing a fairly representative Committee we had to consider between my right hon. Friend and the Under Secretary for the Colonies and the Under Secretary for India from among those who sit on this Bench, who have had useful Colonial experience, and on the whole it was thought desirable to nominate the Under Secretary for India (Sir John Gorst). As to the other names mentioned, of course we should be glad to have the assistance of other hon. Members acquainted with the subject, but I think we have nominated a fairly representative Committee.

Other Members rose to speak.

MR. SPEAKER: The rules do not permit of more than two speeches on each name.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed' "That Mr. Gerald Balfour be a Member of said Committee."

MR. GLADSTONE (Mid Lothian): Now, I may be allowed a word. My speech will not be an aggressive one. I gather from what the right hon. Gentleman opposite said, that he will not be disinclined to confer with my right hon. Friend as to making additions to the Committee, with a view to strengthening it as much as possible? If he will go so far as that we shall be perfectly satisfied.

*MR. RITCHIE: Certainly. I shall be glad to confer with the right hon. Gentleman with the view of adding to the names, if that should be thought desirable.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question—

"That Mr. Sydney Buxton, Dr. Clark, Sir John Colomb, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Mr. Gill, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Maclean, Colonel Malcolm, Mr. Rankin, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Sellar, Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Wodehouse, and Mr. Ritchie be Members of the said Committee; that the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; that five be the quorum"

—put and agreed to.

Mr. Ritchie

WOODS AND FORESTS AND LAND REVENUES OF THE CROWN.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Select Committee on Woods and Forests and Land Revenues of the Crown do consist of Nineteen Members."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I have put down a notice of Amendment to this Motion and I may briefly state the ground on which I have done so. Substantially I think the Government have broken faith with Scotch Members. I do not think I am putting it too strongly in that way. We were promised a special inquiry into the Scottish portion of the subject.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): If the hon. Gentleman will forgive me for interrupting him I would like to make an observation. The Government have been reconsidering the whole subject intended to be raised before the Committee, and after full consideration of the points in which the hon. Member is interested, have decided that a small Commission shall be appointed to deal with certain facts on the spot in regard to the exercise of Crown rights of salmon fishing in Scotland and off the coast of Scotland, so as to obtain information which the House at the present moment is without, and this information being obtained the House will be in a position to entertain any proposition in regard to it. I trust this will be satisfactory to the hon. Gentleman. The administration comes within the scope of the inquiry by Committee, and the facts will be ascertained by a small Commission.

MR. BUCHANAN: I should like to ask if the Commission will have power to inquire into the past conduct of the Woods and Forests Department as to the disposal of rights such as those on Loch Moira, and, whether, pending the result of the inquiry by Commission, alienation of such rights shall be suspended?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Commissioners will have power to inquire into the history and whatever may be cognate to the matter, but the Commission will not have the power to say whether the Woods and Forests Department has done right or wrong in what has occured, they will ascertain all the facts of the case as regards the past and the

present time, and pending this statement of facts the Department will not alienate any further Crown rights of footing.

MR. BUCHANAN: After the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, it will not be necessary for me to proceed with my opposition. I will only ask the right hon. Gentleman to take care that the inquiry of the Commissioners is directed particularly to the alienation of fishing rights in lochs the conveyance of which has been held to imply conveyance of other rights besides fishing.

Question put and agreed to—

Motion made and Question, "That Mr. Arthur Acland, Sir Joseph Bailey, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, and Mr. W. G. C. Bentinck be Members of said Committee" —put, and agreed to.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Mr. Stormonth Darling be a Member of the Committee."

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): On this name I would raise the question my hon. Friend asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman will, under the scope of inquiry, include the question of the transfer of other rights than those of fishing simply.

MR. SPEAKER: That can hardly be raised upon a particular name.

DR. CAMERON: I thought I could raise the point. I have no wish to divide against any particular name.

MR. SPEAKER: It may come in a Motion for an instruction to the Committee, and the hon. Gentleman can give notice of that if he thinks fit.

DR. CAMERON: I thought it would be convenient if I raised my objection on the first Scotch name and referred to the exclusion of Scotch Members.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think it will be found that the terms of reference to the small Commission will be satisfactory to the hon. Gentleman, and he will not be without the power of moving an Address to the Crown to widen the scope of inquiry if he desires it, but I think the references will be found sufficient.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Gentleman object to the name?

DR. CAMERON: No, Sir; with the very guarded promise of the right hon. Gentleman I will be satisfied, and will not divide.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question—

"That Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Sir Henry Fletcher, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. Charles Hall, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Isaacs, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Pinkerton, Mr. Samuelson, Mr. Shaw-Stewart, Mr. Tuite, and Mr. Arthur Williams be Members of the said Committee"

—put and agreed to.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL. (No. 187).

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Question [24th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

*SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigton): Mr. Speaker, in resuming the discussion, discontinued on Friday night, on the subject of this Bill, I must confess that I do not feel myself adequately equipped for the occasion, for the reason that, my duty lying in the Lobby more than this chamber, it has not been my privilege to listen to the greater part of the speeches delivered. I have, however, most carefully read such reports as have appeared in the newspapers. I am quite aware that those reports must be to a certain extent imperfect, and I therefore trust that, in alluding to what has fallen from hon. Members, if I do not give the *ipsissima verba* it will not be attributed to any intention on my part to misrepresent what has been said. The impression made in my mind on perusing the speeches of hon. Members was that, with one solitary exception, they have been singularly temperate and encouraging in the aspect which they have exhibited towards this Bill. I would especially allude to the speech which was delivered by the hon. Member for North Aberdeen. It was a model of Parliamentary criticism, and ought to enhance his Parliamentary reputation, though I do not pretend to agree with all that fell from him. His speech was devoted to the proposals of the Government dealing with education. He and other Members expressed the view that the Government, in their proposal to remit the payment of school fees, had dealt with the lower rather than the

upper standards. In dealing with this subject Her Majesty's Government had been actuated by motives which I think are not altogether unworthy or discreditable—namely, to do the greatest good to the greatest number. Of the children in the Board Schools in Scotland, two-thirds of them pay half the fees. Those two-thirds are in the three lower standards. The remaining half are paid by the one-third of the children in the upper standards. Therefore it is obvious that a greater number of parents are benefited than if the upper standards had been taken. Further, the School Boards of Scotland are elected by the parents of the children, and for the most part the School Boards of Scotland naturally interpret the wishes of those parents. I believe I am correct in saying that without a single exception, the payment of fees is increased according as the standard is higher. The payment of fees in the lower standards is invariably less than in the upper standards. These fees are fixed by the School Boards, and therefore we are so far acting in accordance with the expressed views of the electors of the School Boards of Scotland in believing that relief to the fees in the lower standards will be greater than to fees in the upper standards. There is another argument which the hon. Member for North Aberdeen has left out of account. Hon. Members on both sides of the House must have in their recollection many a late sitting last Session in discussing schemes brought forward by the Education Commissioners. The invariable complaint was that the tendency of those schemes was to lift the endowments from primary and to devote them to higher education.

MR. CALDWELL (St. Rollox): It meant that they took the money from the poor people, to whom it was dedicated, and gave it to those in a better position of life.

*SIR H. MAXWELL: Exactly. That is one of the arguments, and I think that that argument would not have been wanting if we had reversed our proposal, and devised a scheme by which education in the upper standards would have been rendered free, and if two-thirds of the children attending school in Scotland had been made liable to payment. I think a great many of the arguments we have heard in favour of primary rather than of advanced education would have been better applied had we brought forward any such proposal. Other hon. Members have said that if we give free education to the lower standards, there will be a tendency among the parents to take their children away when their education in those standards is completed. I do not believe that for one moment. I have some confidence in my fellow countrymen. The educational history of Scotland shows that there is no such tendency, and that the great desire of Scotch parents, however humble their position in life, is to give their children the very best education they can. Will not these parents be much more likely to be able to pay for education in the higher standards, if they are saved the fees during the time their children are being educated in the lower standards? The right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Clackmannan, has said that something like an inquisition will be required in order to ascertain the ability of parents to pay their children's fees. I was for many years Chairman of a rural School Board, many of the conditions of whose district are similar to what are to be found in wealthy districts, and I can conceive of nobody better able to judge of the children, who should be encouraged by giving them free education in the higher standards, or as to the ability of their parents to pay for that education, than members of School Boards who are elected by the people of the parish. It so happens that I received about an hour ago a letter from the Chairman of one of the largest School Boards in Scotland—a parish in Paisley. After expressing the hope that the Government will adhere to the proposal they have made in regard to free education, he concludes:—

"I am persuaded that the School Board, with an efficient officer is thoroughly fitted to discriminate as to cases in which special exemption from the Third Standard is needed, and I do not doubt the general feeling outside the larger towns will be in favour of discretion being given to the School Boards."

I should like to revert for a moment to the speech of the hon. Member for North Aberdeen. I think there was a certain fallacy underlying his figures, and it is important that what I consider the true aspect of those figures should be put before the House and the country. Take the case of Aberdeen. The hon. Member has sup-

posed the Government voting £100,000 for the relief of the poor rate—that is, all over Scotland. But that sum of £100,000 is altogether imaginary.

MR. HUNTER (N. Aberdeen): That would have reference to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year, when he suggested that he would devote £100,000 to the poor rate.

SIR H. MAXWELL: The poor rate of last year is not before the House. But it appears in all the Scotch papers, and this proposal has attracted, as it deserves, considerable attention. And the aspect in which it is presented to the people of Scotland is that there is a proposal to vote £100,000 for the relief of the poor rate, which as the hon. Member justly says would hardly be perceptible in many cases. But if we want to get the value of the relief afforded to the ratepayers by a sum of over £300,000 devoted to free education, we must take a like amount and see what it would do for the relief of the local rates. I will take the case of a man in Aberdeen paying £12 a year rent—not an exorbitant rent in an urban district. The figures quoted by the hon. Member for North Aberdeen was 7,700, which would be only an average of 2¾d., the people paying not more than £2 a year rent.

MR. HUNTER: Under £10.

SIR H. MAXWELL: Certainly not more than £2, by the hon. Member's own figures. I venture to say that persons paying that amonnt of rent will not be paying large school fees. Take the rent of £12, which is a more manageable figure. If £300,000 were devoted to the relief of the local rates, the relief obtained would be 2s. 2d. on £12 rent.

MR. HUNTER: On the poor rate?

SIR W. MAXWELL: On the poor rate the hon. Gentleman takes the relief which would be obtained by a man having three children at school and puts the school fees at 39s. a year; but if a man has three children at school the School Board invariably either remit the fees of the third child or make a considerable reduction, and in 9 out of 10 parishes in Scotland—I am not speaking with regard to Aberdeen—if a man has two or three children at school and the fees are 39s. a year he would get them educated for 25s. But I will go further and suppose the education to be free, in which case that man would certainly get relief to the extent of 25s. a year for his three children, but for how long? He does not keep them at school all their lives, and it would be a very exceptional case for a man to have three children at school for more than three years. But the man is a ratepayer, and the hon. Member opposite has either forgotten or omitted to mention the fact that the rate is payable for life, or at any rate during tenancy, while the school fees are only payable during the education of the children. Therefore, if we take the ordinary relief the man would receive from the application of £300,000 a year to the rates, at 2s. 3d. a year his saving in 30 years would be £3 7s. 6d., while the saving of the parent under the system of free education would be only £3 15s. I submit, therefore, that taking the case the hon. Member has put, he has not put that case fairly—that is, supposing every ratepayer to be a parent with a child at school age. Now, what are the facts in Aberdeen, where at the present moment 14,000 children are being educated in the schools? Suppose those 14,000 children are the children of ratepayers, and the ratepayers of Aberdeen number 22,000; the result would be that the relief, if applied as the hon. Member desires, would only affect two-thirds of the ratepayers in that town. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell) made a speech on Thursday night to which I listened with considerable attention. He pronounced a sort of requiem over the Commissioners of Supply. I do not doubt for one moment the sincerity of the limited compliment he paid that body for the manner in which they had discharged their duties in the past, but I very much regret that he should have thought proper to have dealt a sort of a back-hander to those gentlemen, who, I believe, in the general opinion of the country, have done their duty well. The right hon. Gentleman said that nine-tenths of the Commissioners of Supply took no part in the discharge of the business imposed upon that body. Well, Sir, I know that there is a certain school of political thought which values a scheme of political reform rather by the indignity it metes out to those who are deprived of the privileges

it will accord than by the benefits it will confer on those who are admitted to partake of it. I willingly acquit the right hon. Gentleman of any sympathy with that school, but I cannot help thinking that in deference to the opinions of some of his less generous supporters he was led into an expression which somewhat marred the speech he delivered on the occasion referred to, and I regret it much. I only allude to this because I think it of the greatest importance that the Commissioners of Supply should not be discouraged by anything that is said, either here or elsewhere, from taking their full share of the public business in their different districts under the new state of things. I think, therefore, that in parting with the old state of things, it would have been better and more graceful on the part of the right hon. Gentleman if he had omitted that remark. Now, Sir, there is one subject which I am specially anxious to touch on, because it is a part of the proposals of the Government which has received rather severe criticism, not only from hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, but also from hon. Members sitting behind me. I allude to the proposals in regard to the service franchise. It has been said that we have excluded the voters under the service franchise from participation in the election of the County Councils. But I assert that we have done nothing of the kind. What we have done is to open the door to them by a very simple process which I am conscious they will be able to appreciate. I protest against the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Clackmannan's (Mr. J. B. Balfour) description of the objection that had been urged in this matter. He says it has been alleged that if working men were admitted to this franchise they would be extravagant, and would not spare the money to which they did not contribute. Now, that I think is a most unfair way of putting the case. What we say is that if a man is to be entitled to assist in laying a burden on the shoulders of others he should be called on to bear a portion of the burden himself. The right hon. Gentleman says he objects to putting a man in such a position as to be told, "If you care to make a certain payment you shall have a vote, but if you do not make that payment you shall not have a vote; either the man ought to have a vote, or he ought not; but in the interests of the country, as well as his own, his vote should not be dependent on payment." But what is the law now? Has not a man to pay his rates before he is put on the roll of voters? I am much mistaken if that is not so; at any rate, I have always understood that such is the case. Well, it is exactly the same proposal that is made here. But, whatever may be the ultimate decision of the House on this question, I am confident of this, that there is no class of the community which has a keener sense of true justice than the agricultural labourer of Scotland, and I am not a bit afraid of his thinking he has been unfairly dealt with by this provision. The agricultural labourer at present has no vote for the School Board, although he has one for the Parliamentary representation. I admit there is an anomaly in this respect; but it rests on the same ground as in the present case, that he pays no school rate, and he has a right to be relieved from the payment of school fees. Therefore, I have not the slightest fear of creating any sense of injustice in his mind. Then there is the question of licenses. Hon. Members opposite have expressed regret that the question of licenses should not have been put under the new body. Speaking entirely for myself, I must say that I sympathise with that objection; and to my constituents and elsewhere I have always encouraged the hope that the licensing question will ultimately be referred to the local bodies. But at the same time it should be remembered that we are setting up a new and a very delicate machinery and that the organization of the temperance bodies is very formidable and complete, and very fully armed. I think therefore that my right hon. Friend has done well in hesitating to expose this new machinery to the very perfectly appointed machinery already in existence. I do not, however, abandon the hope that the day is not far distant when the new county system will be so workable that it will be able to undertake the discharge of this duty. I have said there was one exception I must notice to the general tone of the speeches on this proposal on the part of the Government, and as I see opposite to me the right hon. Gentleman (Mr.

Marjoribanks), who delivered the speech I refer to, I will make a few remarks upon it now. The right hon. Gentleman is the single exception to the fairness and impartiality with which these Bills have been received. There was, I regret to say, but one motive apparent in that speech from first to last, and that was to put difficulties in the way of the Government and endeavour to defeat their object. I will not enter into any of the allusions that were made as to battering rams and other things in connection with the agitation in Ireland; nor will I follow the right hon. Gentleman in his references to the Commissioners of Supply. I would, however, remind him of the old Scottish proverb —"He is the son of a laird and will in time be one of the lairds himsel'." He is a Commissioner of Supply and the son of a Commissioner of Supply, and I think the remarks that he addressed to the House with regard to that body came very ill from him. Does not the right hon. Gentleman remember another old proverb—"It is an ill bird that fouls its ain nest." This is certainly not a lairds' or a landlords' Bill, and I cannot conceive under what possible conditions it can be described as such. It is a Bill which will hand over a very large measure of power which has hitherto been in the hands of the landlords to the people of the country, and if it does not go so far as the right hon. Gentleman in his new-born zeal would wish, I think he might at least admit that it goes a considerable way. The right hon. Gentleman has threatened that unless his views are largely met he will do his utmost to defeat the Bill. I am glad to say he is the only one in any part of the House who has used that sort of language. I will not detain the House longer except to express a hope that the motion for the Second Reading will not be deferred beyond to-night. I would remind the House that the year is going on and we have already arrived at a late part of the Session. We are all, with the exception I have mentioned, agreed on the general principle of the Bill, although we may differ in our opinions as to the mode of carrying out the details; and I do not altogether despair of getting the assent of hon. and right hon. gentlemen opposite to the proposition that as far as it goes it is a good Bill. Therefore I think the sooner we come to the Vote the better. But, Sir, before I sit down, I should like to take this opportunity, which is probably the last and not improbably the best I shall have of expressing a confident hope—amounting almost to a belief—that my brother Commissioners of Supply in Scotland will not stand aloof from the new order of things which is to be set up. I believe it is most important, in the best interests of every class of the community, that men of leisure and means should continue that which they have done in the past, namely, to take an intelligent and active interest in the administration of affairs in their own locality. I hope they will follow the excellent example which has been set to them by members of Quarter Sessions in England, and that they will not shrink from the irritation and risk of defeat which is inseparable from a popular election, but will come forward and do what I believe to be their duty, and if they do, it will, I believe, be not only for the good of the community at large, but it will be also to their own satisfaction, for they will be discharging this duty, not in virtue of any circumstances of position or birth, but because they have been elected by the approving voice of their fellow citizens.

MR. CHARLES S. PARKER (Perth): I respond to the hope of the hon. Baronet that this debate may be brought to a conclusion this evening, and therefore, for my part, I shall endeavour to compress within a very small compass what I have to say. And first, let me in return for the compliment which the hon. Baronet has paid to this side of the House, say I treat it as a matter of rejoicing for the country, that we have on both sides of the House so much harmony, at all events, on the principle of this Bill. I am rather sorry that the hon. Baronet should have found it necessary to make any exception in his references to this side of the House. For my own part, nothing could have been more simple and more fair than the speech he has just delivered. The truth is that the broad principle of this Bill is one on which we are all happily agreed, and I think I may, in fairness to this side of the House, say it is a principle which has been largely advocated by us. For the last 20 years I have been in the

habit of advocating the broad principle which is laid down by those who have introduced this measure, that the system of Municipal Government in boroughs should be extended to the counties. I have always regarded it as one consequence of the introduction of household suffrage, so I only regret—and that is the opinion and feeling on this side of the House—that having so boldly laid down the principle, the Government have not been equally bold in its application. I think the country generally has felt that this Bill is inadequate, and that there has been less enthusiasm and less interest displayed in Scotland about it than certainly would have been the case, if it had dealt more boldly with the question with which we have to do. We are, in principle, creating a new Government which, we believe, will be the best Government for the counties, and is it not strange that we should withhold from that Government some of the most important functions of County Government, and thereby run the risk that Gentlemen whose time is of value, and who otherwise might come forward as the hon. Baronet hopes, to take a prominent part in the administration of county matters, may possibly feel hardly enough interest in the County Council to induce them to do so? Now, Sir, we have entrusted to the Municipal Government in boroughs the charge of the police, and yet, while we are creating on the same model a Municipal Government for the counties, we do not entrust them with like functions in that respect. The only explanation I have heard of this is a suggestion that with certain counties in Scotland, under the franchise given by this Bill, it might happen that the County Council would perhaps be scarcely competent or scarcely disposed to exercise with efficiency the control of the police on important questions. But suppose we grant this, instead of mutilating the Bill, there are two other courses, either of which I think it would have been wiser to adopt. It might have been possible, provided those apprehensions as to certain counties were well founded, to have made exceptional provisions for those counties. On the other hand, as has been already suggested, if we had not done that, we might at all events make provision that in the case of failure on the part of the County Council to perform its duty, that duty should devolve on the Secretary for Scotland or some other high authority, just as in other cases, where the School Board refuses to do its duty, or the parish vestry does not properly perform its functions, there are high authorities which can step in and do it. As to licensing, I must admit there is a good deal in the argument which has been adduced for not having introduced it into this Bill. I certainly should have preferred a bolder course, although I know that the extreme temperance party are by no means satisfied with the licensing system in boroughs. Still, taking the broad, general opinion which prevails in Scotland, I think there is no very great complaint about the administration of the licensing laws in boroughs. On the whole, I think the system is very efficiently carried out. And while, then, we are creating a new responsible elective government in counties, we have side by side with them the present Magistrates of large experience. The question is, which of the two are the most likely to be able to conduct these laws in exact accordance with the wishes of the community. I am sure that the opinion throughout Scotland would be in favour of the licensing being managed by those who are responsible to the people. I know that the trade concerned might be apprehensive that their interests under such a system might be harshly dealt with; but that has not proved to be the case in boroughs, and I do not know of any good reason why in counties it should be the result. I imagine the new County Council would probably deal as justly with the liquor trade as the Magistrates in boroughs do, and therefore we might safely leave it in their hands. Another matter in which we are somewhat disappointed is the manner in which education is dealt with in this Bill. There has been a general expectation throughout Scotland that there might be some means of dealing in this Bill with education through the County Authority, especially with regard to higher education, which cannot be very well dealt with in the smaller districts. I think most Members of the House are aware of the terms of the Bill which was recently introduced in this House in regard to intermediate education in Wales—a Bill which proposed an organization for controlling it in con-

nection with the County Councils, and probably most of the Scotch Members will remember that a Scotch Member last year brought in a Bill in which some similar proposal was included, giving the County Authority limited power of dealing with higher education in counties. There has been a general hope among teachers in Scotland that the county organization would afford some kind of higher authority, which could act as a Court of Appeal in cases of arbitrary dismissal, such as occasionally occur under the smaller School Boards where personal feeling is apt to have some influence. But both of these things are absent from the Bill. We are told from the Treasury Bench it was a mistake to suppose that this was a Bill for free education. I do not like to refer to electioneering topics; possibly on another occasion, and in another place, we may hear claims as to which is the party that has introduced free education to Scotland. The Treasury tell us, that simply, in this case, there was a sum of money coming to Scotland from personal property to be given in relief of the rates, and that owing to manifestations of opinion throughout Scotland, not confined to one party, it became evident that the Scotch people preferred that the money should go to educational purposes, and particularly to the relief of parents in the payment of school fees. Now there does seem to me to be a want of thoroughness in this Bill. If you intend to devote so large a sum as £171,000 to the relief of parents in the matter of school fees, why should not the Government have fairly faced the whole question of free education on this occasion, because when they were dealing with so large a sum annually, surely it was time to consider how far they could go if more money had been available for free education? I am sorry that we have been practically left by the English Members to discuss this matter alone, for I believe that there are many English Members, who, if they had been present, would have evinced great interest in this first experiment in the matter of free education. Now, how is it proposed to apply this money which is to be devoted to the purposes of free education? The question is, should you give it to the earlier standards, or should it be given to the higher standards. Well, no doubt, the simpler and most obvious course was to give it to the lower standards, but I have no doubt that many Members of this House have received, as I have done, letters from School Boards and other Educational Authorities, pointing out the danger of adopting this course. I do not think that the hon. Baronet quite adequately answered the arguments on this point. He said that the parents in Scotland, generally, had a very great deal more regard for education than those in England, and that, if you relieve them in the lower standards they will be likely to spend money in keeping their children at school when they reach the higher standards. I hope it may be true; but we must be practical, and I think, taking it practically, every one who has watched the question must be well aware that there comes a crisis in the school life of a child, at which its power of earning wages becomes worth something—at which it is costing more for food and clothing, and at which, consequently, the parent begins to think of taking it away from school. If we relieve a parent from the payment of fees up to a certain point, and he is suddenly called upon to pay fees at a time at which the child becomes capable of earning wages, I am afraid there will be a considerable tendency to make that the point, more than at present, at which children shall leave school. Of course I know that in competition with this scheme there are certain non-educational claims. There is the proposed grant of £30,000 for the highlands and of £34,000 for roads, and in Committee we shall have to discuss whether these sums are to be devoted to this purpose. But there is another resource for us and that is the rates, and it might be fitting for the School Board, after the child leaves the compulsory standard, to decide if he should receive aid in the other standards; indeed, in this way you might institute a description of bursaries to encourage parents to allow their children to continue at school. There are other points on which I should like to speak, but I will not trespass longer on the time of the House. What I have endeavoured to represent is that it would have been better if this Bill containing a bold principle had been bolder in its application, and I entertain some hope that in Committee we may be able to hand over

the control of the police to the County Councils in proper safeguards. I am afraid we may not this year entrust to the Council Licensing Duties, but I hope we may do so before long. And in regard to education, I think that in respect of education I may say that if we have not sufficient money to secure a complete system of education, we may, at any rate, after a child has passed through the compulsory standards, provide something in the shape of bursaries rather than in that of eleemosynary aid.

MR. J. H. C. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.): I believe that the general principle underlying this Bill receives such a large measure of acceptance from Members sitting on both sides of the House, that it will undoubtedly be read a second time without a Division. The debate has indeed been somewhat extended, but it has been suggested—I confess with considerable force—that this debate, which has been more or less of a detailed character, may have the effect of lessening the discussion in Committee. It is, therefore, only right that those who sit on this side of the House, and who feel very strongly on this subject, should take an opportunity of expressing their opinion as freely, as fully, and as frankly as hon. Members opposite, in order that the Government may be in a position to know exactly the general tendency of feeling throughout the House. Now, Sir, in the first instance, I trust that I may be allowed to offer a well-merited compliment to the Commissioners of Supply in the various counties of Scotland. I am well aware that in certain counties, especially perhaps in Lanarkshire, a portion of which I have the honour to represent, there is a feeling of soreness amongst the Commissioners of Supply, for they think that this measure casts somewhat of a slur upon them in regard to their action in the past. But I am perfectly certain that nothing could be further from the mind of the Government who introduced this measure than any idea of that sort. We Scotsmen in every part of the House fully appreciate and are deeply grateful for the admirable economy and efficiency with which the Commissioners of Supply have managed county business in the past, and especially is this the case with regard to Lanarkshire, where as the work has been greater, so is the gratitude greater. But sentiment is an important factor in politics. Many provisions of this Bill are opposed more or less as a matter of sentiment, while sentiment has had much to do with the demand for a scheme of Scottish County Government. Only last year we in Scotland were miles ahead of England in the matter of County Government. But last year England took a gigantic stride and passed us, and it is therefore thought necessary we should hurry up in order to regain our position. I congratulate the Government on the broad and comprehensive principles which underlie the whole of this measure. Roughly speaking, it is a Bill to constitute a popularly elected County Council which is to take the place of the Commissioners of Supply in the management of county business. How is that Council to be constituted? A county is to be divided into single-membered constituencies. I am well aware that that raises differences of opinion which are not political. I myself have received expressions of opinion from both political Parties, advocating a larger number of Members than one for each constituency; but having gone into the facts of the case, I confess I am still inclined to be in favour of the principle of single-member constituencies, but it is a point which merits careful consideration. Well, the constituencies being constituted, the next question which arises is—Who are to be the electors? In the first place, the householders are to be the electors, both male and female; and at once the difficulty confronts us, that in Scotland all rates are paid by the owner, and there is a Radical maxim that taxation and representation should go together. I agree that they should. And in order to obviate the difficulty, the principle of stereotyping the old rates is introduced into this Bill. The principle, I admit, is, at first sight, extremely captivating, but there are special cases which must be dealt with. In several counties there has been capital expenditure incurred for paying off debts arising from the provision of public buildings—such as police stations, court houses, and asylums. In Lanarkshire, for instance, in the year 1888-89, £10,000 has been tpaid as temporary capital expendiure, and this ought not, in fair-

ness, to be included in the normal rate for stereotyping purposes. Therefore, I cannot too strongly emphasize the fact that, in all fairness, some alteration should be made in the arrangement which has been laid down. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) suggested as an alternative that the rates should be paid in equal proportions except of course in the case of existing leases by landlords and tenants. That plan has, at first sight, the merit of fairness and eminently the merit of simplicity. But from what I know of the right hon. Gentleman politically, if the Government had proceeded upon such a plan the right hon. Gentleman would have been one of the first to denounce the Government for a proposal which he would say was under cover of Local Government to shift a burden from owners to occupiers. But if the right hon. Gentleman expresses the view he did the other night as the matured opinion of the official Opposition, I confess I should be inclined to advise the Government to accept the suggestion as such, and make it known in Scotland that they do so to meet the views of Leaders of the Opposition. The next body of electors is that of the Peers, but as they are not very numerous their register will not give much difficulty. But then we come to the service franchise, and the Government proposal is that those who hold houses as part of their conditions of service shall vote when they claim to pay rates. Personally, I am strongly in favour of including all service franchise occupiers on the County Council register. There are two minor objections to the Government proposal; one is the expense and trouble of an extra and complicated register instead of adopting the whole Parliamentary register, with the addition of women and Peers, and another difficulty arises from the fact that these voters will only be called upon to pay rates in the current year—that is to say, every third year. But after all, the great objection is that these voters will, whether rightly or wrongly, consider themselves to be placed in a position of inferiority when, as a matter of fact, they are entitled to every possible consideration. I have a special place in my mind—Leadhills, in my own constituency. The population of Leadhills, to a very large extent, hold under a peculiar tenure, and vote for a Parliamentary representative under the service franchise while they have no votes at School Board elections. There is a very large number of voters there on the Parliamentary Register, but only 20 or so on the School Board roll. So strongly impressed am I with the necessity of their case that I have placed my name on the back of a Bill in company with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Clackmannan (Mr. J. B. Balfour) for the purpose of putting the Leadhills voters on the School Board Register. It seems to me that service franchise occupiers pay rates almost, if not quite, to the same extent as other householders. They pay indirectly, but they pay because the rates of the houses on which they live form part of the value they receive for their services, and I suppose something of this sort was recognized when they were placed on the Parliamentary Register. Whether or not I think it is scarcely worth while making two bites at a cherry. I am perfectly certain that the County Council Vote will be given to all service franchise occupiers within the next year or two, and why not make the concession at once? The Councils are to be elected by single Member constituencies, and the first thing that struck the hon. Member for Dundee (Mr. Firth) is that there are to be no aldermen. The hon. Member says he is glad there are no aldermen. I am equally glad we have no prospect of Deputy Chairmen with salaries of £2,000 a year. I cordially recognize the advantage of making the Convener of the County, the Lord Lieutenant, the Chairman of County Road Trustees, and the Chairman of the Local Authority *ex officio* members of the first Council; it is something in the direction of continuity, which is secured in burghs by the system of one member in three retiring each year, so that the ward has always two more or less experienced representatives. Objection has been urged to the latitude allowed in the choice of Chairman, but be it remembered, the power to the Council to go outside for a Chairman is merely permissive; it simply widens the field of choice. They are not required to choose

an outsider any more than the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill would compel a man to marry his deceased wife's sister. After all, if you cannot trust a County Council to elect its own Chairman, with what can you trust it? One hon. Member mentioned the analogy of Parliament, but I, for my part, consider that it would be most unfortunate if we, having a Member, eminently qualified in our opinion for Speaker, being, in fact, a Speaker of experience, and having the confidence of the House, lose him because of some local quarrel in his his constituency. Let us in this respect improve upon the precedent of the House of Commons. This cannot be regarded as overriding the public will any more than what occurs in the burghs. In the burghs each Councillor holds his seat for three years, but if close to the end of his tenure of office he is elected Provost by his fellow Councillors, he gets a fresh lease of office for three years without any reference whatever to his constituents. Many points there are I might touch upon in the Bill, but such discussion would perhaps be more pertinent to the next stage. But I am anxious to point out that I cordially welcome the concession of the Government to the principle of free education, and am proud of the fact that I was one of the first to force this on the attention of Her Majesty's Government There are two provisos required by me in regard to the question of free education—first, that, if possible, no additional burden shall be cast upon the ratepayers, and, secondly, that the denominational schools shall not be in any way prejudiced. The scheme of the Government satisfies both these conditions. As a former member of a School Board, I can say that the most painful part of my official experience was when defaulting parents were brought before the Board, and it was too evident that they were scarcely able to find food and clothing for their children. They certainly could not afford school fees, and yet were too proud to go to the Parochial Board. The plan of the Government gets rid of this reference to the Parochial Board, and is admirable so far as it goes. I say emphatically so far as it goes. It is a scheme which has been well thought out, and I believe I am correct in saying that it adds to the many obligations we owe to Mr. Craig, the Secretary of the Scotch Education Department. If we are only to have £171,000 for educational purposes I do not think we could possibly make a better use of the money than is here proposed. I know the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Dr. Hunter) advises that the fees should be abolished for the three higher standards rather than the three lower standards, but with all respect for his high educational authority, I think that is too "professorial" a view of the matter. Undoubtedly two-thirds at least of the entire number of children in our schools are in the lower standards, and it should be further remembered that the vast majority of the very poor never at present get beyond these first three standards; their homes are not comfortable and do not provide the means for learning and preparing lessons out of school hours, and so the children do not rise to the higher standards. It is the invariable rule, with elected School Boards to make the fees higher for the higher standards, and this they do entirely in accordance with the wishes of their constituents. For my own part, I think it would be sheer madness to remove the fees for the higher standards and leave them for the lower if you wish to benefit the class upon whom the pressure of school fees is most heavy. The whole gist of the attacks we from time to time make upon the endowment schemes of the Education Department is that higher education is favoured at the expense of elementary education. I am perfectly certain you would get no thanks from the people of Scotland if you adopted the hon. Member's suggestion in this particular; it would be a case of giving a stone when bread is asked for. I do not, however, see why the limit for educational purposes should be £171,000. I do not see why the £21,000 for Parochial Boards should not be diverted to educational purposes, as the Parochial Boards will, in future, be relieved from having to pay an annually increasing sum of £20,000 in payment of school fees, and though I am of opinion that £30,000 for the Highlands is thoroughly well appropriated, yet I am of an equally strong opinion that the amount should come from Imperial sources. The Highlands are an integral portion of the United Kingdom just as Cornwall,

and just as, if exceptional distress existed in Cornwall, relief would be given from the Imperial Exchequer, so also should it come from that source for the Highlands. Unfortunately, however, the Secretary for Scotland is not in the Cabinet. No head of a spending Department receives proper justice unless he has a seat in the Cabinet where he can constantly worry, bombard, and "nag" at the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He then gets what he wants. Letters and calls will never do it. Letters remain unanswered and the Chancellor of the Exchequer is never at home. With these sums of £21,000 and £30,000 added to the original £171,000 we should have £222,000 for education. But I protest against any alienation of the grant of £35,000 for roads; the rate for roads is exceptionally heavy in most rural parishes, and it may be pointed out that this rate falls half on the owner and half on the occupier. But there is another way in which about £35,000 might be obtained to free education. In the larger towns School Boards would probably be empowered by their constituents to charge fees in some schools, and these schools might continue to receive the old grants but not the new grants, subject, of course, to the veto of the Scotch Education Department. Care would of course have to be taken that there is an ample supply of quite Free Schools. Some arrangement of this kind would set loose a sum of between £30,000 and £35,000. £155,000 would free the lowest standards, and an additional £90,000 would free the next two standards. Therefore, £245,000 would free the five standards, leaving £12,000 for establishing free scholarships in the Sixth Standard. That would be practically free education all round, without limiting it, as my hon. Friend does, to four years. I believe the Bill to be a useful and a good measure, and if the Government can introduce a system which will be as near free education as possible, without increasing the local rates or affecting the position of the denominational schools, I am confident they will receive the unbounded and unstinted gratitude of the Scottish people.

*SIR JOHN KINLOCH (Perth, E.): There are four important subjects on which we on this (the Opposition) side of the House think the Bill must be amended, in order to make it acceptable to the people of Scotland. Those four points are an addition to the constituencies which are to elect the Councils, the abolition of the Commissioners of Supply, free education, and, if possible, the introduction of the licensing question. As to the first point, we contend that the service franchise voters indirectly pay rates. I think the voluntary payment proposed by the Government we may at once dismiss, as in actual practice it would be a dead letter. The service franchise voters consist of ploughmen, labourers, gardeners, keepers, and so on in the country, and a few miners in the mining districts. These men occupy houses which are certainly worth £4, but which are not returned by the owners in the valuation, and the occupiers are therefore excluded from the duties of citizenship. It seems to me that because the owner does not return the house, that is no reason why a man should be deprived of his civil rights. £4 is generally considered as the value of the labourer's cottages in Scotland, and I think if we cannot get the full service franchise it would be a step in the right direction to insist that these houses should be returned in the Valuation Roll at their value or at a minimum value of £4. The working of this would be to make a £4 house a consequence to the service voter, who had a house at all. By adopting a provision of this kind, at least two-thirds of the service franchise voters would have the vote, only the single-room voters being then excluded. The District Committees would really have very important duties to perform. They would have the management of the roads, they would be the Local Authority and have charge of the public health. The Government proposed that these Committees should be composed of County Councillors and two Members from every Parochial Board or Parish Council. We should have begun, then, at the parish, which is really the first unit of Local Government, and fixed who were to elect the Parish Councillors. They should be elected by the same body that elected the County Council. It would also be an advantage to have one register, so that one list of voters might serve the County Council, the Parish Council, and the School Board. I hope, also, there will be a clause in the Bill making women eligible to sit in the

Councils. With regard to the Commissioners of Supply, it seems to me that the best of the Commissioners will be elected to the County Councils, as the counties will trust those who have done the business so admirably before, and you would only have the rump of the Commissioners of Supply to choose your Committee of seven from. As to the control of the police, the argument that the boroughs do already take charge of the police seems to me unanswerable so far as the counties are concerned, and no doubt the Police Committe of the County Council will do the work admirably if, added to the Committee, we have the Sheriff and the Lord Lieutenant. I think it important that the Sheriff should be a member of the Committee, though not the Chairman, as I do not think he would have time to do the work of Chairman. The second function for which the Commissioners of Supply were kept up was to have a check on capital expenditure. I may point out that the School Boards, a popular elected body, had no such check imposed upon them; and, taking Scotland generally, they had not over expended the money. I will not detain the House with reference to free education, and I will say no more about licensing than that it would be an improvement on the present system if a Committee of the County Council had the conduct of licensing. If, however, the first three points are met—namely those with regard to the service franchise, the Commissioners of Supply, and free education, I think this measure will be thoroughly appreciated by the people of Scotland.

MR. J. A. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): I should be very glad if the Government would see their way to give the service voters a vote for the County Council. But I am not prepared to support most of the views of my hon. Friend who has just sat down. This discussion has taken the form of a minute criticism of details, and I hope that this will have the effect of shortening the discussion in Committee on the Bill. The speech, which has been so justly eulogized, of the hon. and learned Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) in some respects, I think, went rather over the mark. I think my hon. and learned Friend gave rather too dark a colour to the present condition of education in Scotland. He spoke of there being 75 per cent of children of school age now on the register, and only 58 per cent in average attendance, and said these figures showed an alarming state of matters. I do not agree with him. I do not find in the Reports of the Education Department of last year that the figures are exactly as he gave them. According to the Education Report, out of 100 children of school age in Scotland 80 were on the register and 60 in daily attendance, and the Report went on to say that that showed that the gradual improvement of previous years was still maintained, though it was not yet quite satisfactory. In Scotland the school age does not begin until five, and it is rare to find children so young at school. That explains the low average attendance. I think my hon. Friend did injustice to the public schools in Scotland in comparing the merits of the different classes of schools. He said that the Free Church Schools were the best, and that they were more efficient because they gained a Government grant of 20s. 1¼d., whereas the School Board Schools gained only 18s. 5d. I do not dispute that the Free Church Schools are very good, but I object to having them compared in this way with the public schools. We cannot satisfactorily compare two things unless they are of the same kind. I maintain that the Free Church Schools are quite different from the public schools of Scotland. The public schools contain among them schools of all kinds, from the very poorest. The Free Church Schools are an illustration of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. There are only 25 of them, and amongst them are normal schools in connection with training colleges. With regard to the school fees, I admit that very substantial relief will be given by the Government proposal to contribute to the payment of fees. I frankly acknowledge that I have not been an advocate of free education, because I think that the parent has an interest in the education of his child, and that interest is represented by the school fee. In practice there has not been any great grievance felt, because by the Education Act provision has been made for the very poorest, but not in the best possible way, as the parents are brought into contact with the Parochial Boards, which in itself is very objectionable. I think, however, that objection might be overcome by putting the School Board

in between the parent and the Parochial Board. Then we have a considerable provision of educational endowments available for free scholarships for promising children. In Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Aberdeen these endowments are very large. I understand that in Glasgow about one-tenth of the children attending schools have their fees paid, to some extent by the Parochial Board, but to a greater extent by educational endowments. Besides this, we have private benevolence to fall back upon in assisting the payment of fees. In this way it has come about that there has been no strong complaint of any hardship in connection with the payment of fees. The Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, in their last year's Report, say—

"We have no evidence that the failure in attendance is caused by the pressure of school fees. In the district where the attendance is most defective school fees are almost virtually in abeyance, and the revenue therefrom is very small."

At the same time, there is no denying that the abolition of school fees would be a great relief to many and would make education easier. The plan of the Government for applying this contribution of £171,000, is, I agree with other hon. Members, as good a one as could be devised for a limited amount of this kind. It has been objected by several hon. Members that the Government are beginning at the wrong end, the foot of the scale instead of the top; and from an educational point of view that is true. But now the question is how to give most relief, and that being so, the Government could not do better than by proceeding as they propose. With regard to the provision for full places for children in the higher standard, it has been objected that the power given to the School Board would virtually repeat the obnoxious interference of the Parochial Boards. I do not think so. No doubt the School Boards will have to consider who are deserving and who are in circumstances to require assistance; but an inquiry of this kind by the School Board is quite different from an investigation by the Parochial Board, and I do not think it would be regarded by a parent as so invidious or as so offensive as an inquiry by the Parochial Board. A doubt has been expressed whether the School Board is at liberty to conduct an inquiry of this kind. The same kind of thing, however, is already being done. Large sums of money under the schemes of the Endowment Commissioners are entrusted to the governing bodies of schools to be spent on free education. In Glasgow there is a Free Educational Board, and considerable sums are spent by it on free scholarships, whilst in Edinburgh a very large number of free scholarships are distributed by the governors. This has been going on now for one or two years, and has been working very satisfactorily. There has been no complaint of any difficulty on the part of the governors in making a satisfactory selection of scholars. No doubt it would be more logical, if the money was at hand, to go further than the Government propose to go—to go the whole length, up to the limit of compulsory education. Powers would have to be given to School Boards to inquire into the circumstances of the scholars, and money should be especially allocated to them for scholarships. I hope the Government will lose no time in fixing the date at which the fees in the lower standards are to stop. I am informed that already, because of these discussions in Parliament, some parents are beginning to grudge paying the fees. They understand that fees are to be no longer required, and the School Boards are put to a disadvantage through not knowing the date when the change is to take place. Then, I would say a word on the subject of the application of this money in lieu of school fees being made to all State-aided schools on the same terms. I have been surprised to hear some hon. Gentlemen question the propriety of that arrangement. But, in the eye of the State, all schools which conform to the regulations of the Education Act are part of the national system, and they should be all treated equally in such a matter as contribution in lieu of school fees. It would be unfair and unjust to deal otherwise with them. Reference has been made to denominational education, but neither in public schools nor in voluntary schools does the Education Department—or, in other words, does the State—take any cognizance of religious education except that it is given accompanied with the restriction of the conscience clause. No Government grant is given for religious instruction. There is no Government inspection; there is no fee charged for

it in the Government schools, therefore it would be altogether unreasonable to take it into account either in public schools or private schools in dealing with the question of school fees. Religious education is given in these schools in accordance with the almost unanimous wish of the people of Scotland, and it is strange that reflection should be cast on the giving of that instruction by hon. Members who pride themselves on their advocacy of Home Rule. The question of including education among the subjects to be administered by the County Councils has been frequently referred to. I think the Government are right in not disturbing existing arrangements at present until it has been seen how these new Councils will work. There is no doubt there is some change desirable in our parish arrangements in connection with the School Board. It is generally felt that many of the School Board areas are too small, and whether by uniting the areas and reducing the number of School Boards, or by placing the School Boards under the supervision of a Committee of the County Council, it may be desirable to have some change. In the meantime, the work is going on, and it would be a pity to disturb it by any new arrangement; therefore, I think the Government are right in not including education in any way in the Bill. Such a question can only be satisfactorily dealt with by a Board elected for the purpose. As to the £30,000 to be allocated to the Highlands, to which reference has been made by the hon. Member for Lanarkshire, it is not quite obvious why the money should come from Scotland and not from the Imperial Exchequer. I am disposed to agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Orkney and Shetland that it would be better to have larger electoral areas, to return each two Members, as the result would probably be that owners and occupiers would be equally represented. However, it is not a matter of pressing importance. I am particularly pleased that there is to be an officer of health for each district, as the Public Health Act is almost a dead letter in Scotland. The Act is not carried out as it ought to be, and this Bill gives us the opportuuity of seeing a better state of things inaugurated. I congratulate my hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate on the general character of the criticisms on the Bill—the minuteness of which criticism may probably prove a saving of the time of the House when we get into Committee.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Lanark, Govan): It is plain that there is a great deal of diversity of opinion in relation to this Bill. Judging from the feeling of the people of my own constituency, this Bill has caused great disappointment in Scotland, and has everywhere failed to excite anything like enthusiasm. It has fallen flat on the community, and it will take a great deal of skill to give it vitality. If the Lord Advocate had been left a free hand, I feel assured he would have given to his countrymen a Bill which would have been more acceptable, and which would have embraced subjects which he has left out entirely, for what reason is best known to himself. The only real power the County Councils will have will be to levy rates and to look after roads, bridges, and sanitation. A real Local Government measure ought to give the Councils all the power possessed by Municipal Authorities in burghs. To my mind it will be a very difficult thing to get good men to take a seat on a Board the main business of which is to impose rates. And the Government are not content with the invidious distinction of asking gentlemen to go upon a Board of this kind, but they lay down the principle which would not be tolerated for an instant by a sensible, intelligent man—that the Councils are to go outside themselves for a Convener in order, as it was stated by one right hon. Gentleman, that they might put the machinery in motion—as if, forsooth, the gentlemen who will be elected to the County Council would not be able of themselves to put the machinery in motion for conducting their own body. Why, in 1872, when the present Education Act was put into force in Scotland, the best men in the country vied for seats on the School Boards, and there was no difficulty experienced in finding men of sufficient ability to act as Conveners, although the new Boards had an immense amount of work to do. They had the whole machinery of education to set in order, and they had also —especially in the large towns—a great deal of work to do in the erection of suitable schools. I feel satisfied that if in Scotland we could find men capable

of setting in motion the machinery of the Education Act of 1872, we shall also find gentlemen within the pale of the County Councils perfectly capable in every district of fulfilling the duty of Conveners of the counties. I was greatly pleased with the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen, which treated on education and gave some highly interesting and satisfactory statistics which will go a long way towards enlightening the minds of hon. Members as to what is wanted in Scotland. I hope he will find the necessary funds to carry out his scheme, and give free education up to the Sixth Standard, and that the Lord Advocate will induce the Government to give effect to it. I would qualify that by saying that it ought to be provided that where a parent does not want his children to go beyond the Third Standard, it should not be compulsory on him to go further, for we all know that the labouring classes in Scotland cannot afford to keep their children long at school after they have mastered the elements of education—reading, writing, and counting. When their girls have arrived at a certain age they want them to assist in the management of the house, and they want their boys to be earning wages. Of course, when it is desired, these boys and girls should be allowed to remain at school until they have passed the Sixth Standard, facilities being afforded the parents for obtaining the education free. With regard to the question of licensing, the Lord Advocate has had in view what happened in connection with the English Local Government Bill, "Burnt bairns dread the fire," and I suppose the right hon. Gentleman thought it better to let the question of licensing alone. But this is one of those matters which the people of Scotland will not let alone. They have made up their minds with regard to it. I would suggest that the Lord Advocate should tack on to his Bill the Local Veto Bill of the hon. Member for Linlithgowshire, and if he does this I am sure there is nothing, apart from the question of education, which will give greater satisfaction to the majority of the people of Scotland. Many Scotch Members, myself amongst the number, are pledged up to the eyes to do all in our power to secure the passing of a Local Veto Bill, and I am convinced that in the event of a General Election taking place no candidate would have a chance of being returned for a Scotch constituency unless prepared to support a Local Veto Bill. We are branded throughout the world as the most drunken nation on the face of the earth, and the people are determined to wipe out the disgrace. Nothing will satisfy them until the responsibility of granting licenses is put in the hands of the ratepayers. It is said that the license fees or duty are to be given to the County Councils by the Government. Well, I hold that this is a very delicate proposal to make. If the License Duty is to go in aid of the rates, it will be an incentive to the localities to support the granting of licenses and the giving of facilities for the carrying on of a trade that the majority of the people are seeking to restrain. As the Government have the Excise in their hands, I hope they will still retain the License Duty, and give to the people of Scotland an equivalent from the Consolidated Fund, so that the County Councils will have no incentive to encourage licensed houses. With regard to the question of police, I hold that as the County Councils are to be responsible for the peace and for the protection of person and property, it is necessary that they have the control and entire supervision of the police. The Secretary for Ireland said it was necessary, in the interests of law and order, that the Imperial Government should have charge of the police in the counties, and he hinted at something which had occurred amongst the crofters in the Highlands, as if they were the bug-bear which should induce the House to deprive the Councils of the control of their own police. I say that it is not the crofters that this House and the right hon. Gentleman have to fear, but the landlords in the Highland districts, who have driven the crofters to desperation. If the people in the Highlands were treated with fairness and consideration, there would be no more loyal people in the dominion. No one has done more to build up this great Empire, by their blood and their lives, than have these Highlanders, and it is a mistake on the part of the House and the Government not to stand by them. We know not the day when we may not be only too glad to avail ourselves of their services. I fear the surroundings of the Chief Secretary are not conducive to his taking an unbiassed view of this

matter. Then, with regard to the service franchise, it is said that the holders of this franchise should not vote for the County Councils because they do not pay direct taxation, and could not, therefore, be trusted with the dispensing of the rates. But from my own experience, I can say that there are no more keen conservators of the public purse than the working man of this country, and I think it ill becomes Gentlemen who, within a very few days, with a light heart, went into the Lobby to vote away millions of money for a very questionable purpose, to use these arguments. These men, together with the holders of the larger franchise, are the bone and sinew of the country, and the producers of the wealth of the country, and we should do all we can to carry them along with us in the government of the country, especially as we have recognized their right to vote for Members of this House. In conclusion, I would merely say that I believe if you clothe the County Councils with the powers I have indicated, and make them co-equal with the Councils in the burghs, you will get the best men of the country to come forward and make the new Local Government what it ought to be, and what the people of Scotland expect it to be.

MR. ASHER (Elgin, N.): In the course of the debate to-night we have had the unusual and interesting feature of two maiden speeches from Scottish Members, and I hope it will not be thought presumption on my part if I offer them my congratulations at their speeches, and express the satisfaction we Scotch Members feel at these acquisitions to our ranks. This debate was opened to-night by an interesting speech from the hon. Baronet the Member for Wigtonshire. It was one to which I looked forward, because I imagined there was some chance that we should find in it an indication of the intentions of the Government with regard to the concessions they might be disposed to make to the views so largely expressed on this side of the House. And I was sorry to find no indication of any concession. I hope, however, we have not yet heard the last word from this Government. Before I deal with some of the more general features of the Bill, there are two preliminary matters with regard to which I should like to say a few words. In the first place, as the representative of a district of burghs in Scotland, I desire to express my concurrence in the course that has been taken by the framers of the Bill, in leaving the Royal and Parliamentary burghs in Scotland alone. I do not deny that there is a loud demand for the extension of Local Government, but I fully recognize that it would have been altogether wrong to attempt to give this extended power to burghs in dealing with counties. I regret there has not been a more complete extension of the burgh system to the counties than is proposed in this Bill. I regret that the Local Government of Scotland is to be dealt with in two separate Bills. It is of importance that the country generally, the householders and ratepayers, should understand the details of the system under which their local affairs are to be governed, and I can conceive nothing more complicated than cross references from one Bill to another. I hope the Lord Advocate will yet consider whether, as a matter of convenience, it would be advantageous to amalgamate the two Bills. It must have been manifest to everyone who has attended these debates that there has rarely been an occasion on which there has been a more general desire entirely to put aside anything of the nature of Party feeling in considering and discussing these measures. The Liberal Party are familiar, by experience, with situations like the present, where they find that nearly the whole of the principles which they had advocated for years are adopted by their opponents. It simply furnishes an illustration of the educational activity of our opponents. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, in the course of his speech, said the broad principle of the Bill was this, that they transferred the government of the county from the representatives of property to representatives of all classes of the ratepayers. I entirely and absolutely assent to the principle, and if I had an examination of the Bills, and discovered that that was their principle, I should have given them my assent. But I should be much more disposed to describe their principle as this—to establish a County Council based on popular election, but subject to unnecessary restrictions, and from which all the more important parts of the county are

most carefully and scrupulously withheld. The defects of the present system, admitted by all parties as I understand, are these: That the government of county affairs is in the hands of bodies not popularly-elected, and that there is an unnecessary multiplication of separate and independent Boards and governing bodies—resulting in waste of time, power, and money which belong to multiplicity of machinery, and in the inferior work, which is the product of the subdivision of authority. A proper scheme of Local Government must grapple with these defects and remove them. With regard to the constitution of the governing bodies, I readily acknowledge that an important step has been taken in the present Bills in providing for a County Council upon a popular franchise, and I think it may be said that the constitution of the County Council is of a satisfactory character. Subject to the one point—namely, the limitation regarding the service franchise occupier, I cannot help thinking that Her Majesty's Government may still take the course of giving way to the strongly-expressed opinion from various quarters of the House as to the franchise on which the County Council is to be based. The whole of the Liberal Members for Scotland, the majority of the Scotch Conservative Members, and all the Members for Scotland belonging to the dissentient Liberal Party are united in opinion upon this point, and I cannot doubt that Her Majesty's Government will take the circumstances into consideration before they come to a final decision on the matter. The other defect is the multiplicity of Boards and governing bodies. There is necessity for their consolidation; but I confess I find a very little step, indeed, in that direction. We have just now the Commissioners of Supply, the road trustees, the Local Authority under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act, the Justices of the Peace, the School Boards, and the parochial bodies. [An hon. MEMBER: And the burghs.] I have carefully guarded myself against an expression of the view that we are not in need of reform of Local Government in burghs; but I accept the view of the framers of the Bills that at present they ought to be limited to the counties. I have dealt with the defects in the government of counties, and one of the cardinal features of the Bills should be to grapple with the defect I have alluded to by consolidating those bodies and uniting their functions in one popularly-constituted body; but I find very little progress in this Bill in that direction. The Commissioners of Supply, carefully maintained by Statute regulating their appointment, will still be an existing part of the administrative bodies of the county. There will still be the Justices of the Peace, the School Boards, and the Parochial Boards, and the only step in the direction of consolidation effected by this Bill, so far as I can see, will be the extinction of the road trustees and the Local Authority under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act. But then you are setting up the separate body of the County Council, and therefore you will have substantially a multiplication of governing bodies rather than a consolidation, which, to my mind, is the direction in which a reform ought to have gone. It is proposed to transfer from the Commissioners of Supply to a popularly-elected Council those duties which the Commissioners of Supply at present discharge. These functions include the making up of the valuation roll, the duties imposed under the Registration Act, the control of the rates, matters affecting the public health, and those entrusted to the Parochial Board. When we come to the Justices, we find that the transfer which is proposed relates to duties which, no doubt, are in themselves important, but which, relatively to other functions devolving on the County Councils, are altogether inferior and unimportant. For instance, it is proposed to transfer from the Justices of the Peace the duties named in the 11th Section of the Bill, such as matters connected with gas supply, regulations as to explosive substances, supervision of weights and measures, and other functions relating to drunkards, wild birds, lunatics, and scientific societies. I give these things in the exact order in which they appear as the functions transferred to the County Councils from the Justices of the Peace. Now, what are the branches of local business which, after these popularly-elected Councils are constituted, will continue to be administered entirely outside the limits of their functions by the old County and Parish Boards, which in my humble opinion, ought to cease to exist after the passing of this Bill? There will remain,

entirely outside the discretion of the County Councils, first, the important subject of education; next, the important business of the administration of the Poor Law; thirdly, the important duties connected with the regulation of the police; in the fourth place, the important functions appertaining to the licensing system; and fifthly, all the judicial functions, and a great many others, that are at present performed by the Justices of the Peace. Well, Sir, I must say that a Bill which merely affects what I have pointed out, which sets up County Councils, but does so little in the way of transferring to those Councils the business of the counties, is, in my opinion, much too limited in its scope to constitute a satisfactory measure of Local Government Reform. I may, however, be fairly asked if I am dissatisfied with this measure, what is the principle and what the scope of a Bill which I myself would recommend. Well, Sir, I reply that I entirely approve of the constitution of a County Council elected by the people, but I think it should be elected on a franchise which ought in all respects to be as extensive as the Parliamentary franchise. Then, Sir, I think that, in the next place, there should be a recognition of the existing territorial districts of Scotland and the county parishes; and while I also approve of District Committees, I am of opinion that there should also be Committees for the parishes, for I am unable to see why persons elected by the several electoral divisions of the parishes should not be constituted into Parish Committees, just as the District Committees are constituted. In the next place, I think that the whole business of both county and parish should be transferred to the new authorities created by this Bill. There ought, in my opinion, to be an allocation of the business of the County Council to the District Committee or the Parish Committee, as the particular business thus remitted might be best adapted to those subordinate bodies. The advantage of such a system would be that with reference to those portions of the business which might be allocated to the smaller areas, there could be a right of appeal from the Parish to the District Committee, in regard to certain matters, or from the District Committee to the Council. In that way you would have the whole business within the county area allocated to the parishes according to requirements, and you would have the Council, as the representative body, overlooking and managing the general business of the county, with a provision for appeal or review, which has hitherto been so much wanted, and which, in regard to some matters, the House must recognize as an important requisite to secure. Then there would be, in addition to this, the great advantage of simplification in regard to the levying of rates; because, if the whole of the business is placed in the hands of the Councils, the District Committees, and the Parish Committees, I fail to see why there should be the slightest difficulty in the smaller and subordinate bodies, who would require money for the discharge of their functions, ascertaining the amount they require; so that, by reporting it to the Rating Authority, it might be easy, by means of a single rate, to levy all it was necessary for the whole business of the county. Sir, when I come to ask why this Bill has not been framed on some such comprehensive plan as that which I have just indicated, I have no doubt the answer will be, that it would have been inexpedient to have loaded the measure with all these details, whereby its passage through this House might have been endangered. I may add that I should have thought—turning again for a moment to the question of the transfer of powers—that it would have been desirable to have transferred from the Justices the whole of their duties—in fact, to have extinguished the existing Justices altogether, and to have given the County Council power to elect Magistrates from their own number, who would possess all the judicial functions appertaining to the Magistrates of the county, and to whom might be transferred all the duties connected with the granting of licenses. Well, Sir, I entirely fail to see how a scheme of this kind would have been so comprehensive in its character as to have endangered the passing of the Bill, and in saying this I totally dissent from the view of hon. and right hon. Members opposite. In my opinion, to have adopted such a plan would have been to have facilitated the passing of the measure; because, as far as we on this side of the House are concerned, there is not the slightest doubt that the only difficulty the Government will experience in getting their Bill accepted will

arise from its extremely limited scope. Every effort will be made on this side to extend the provisions of the measure, and I cannot doubt that, had the Government taken such a course as I suggest, hon. Members opposite would have been equally in favour of a more comprehensive scheme. I am quite aware that the right hon. Gentleman deprecated the expediency of taking up those branches of reform which in any way were suggestive or touched the subjects which were being dealt with in this Bill. I fully appreciate the force of the argument, and the scheme which I have sketched out does not involve any such danger, because, Sir, it appears to me that a Bill of this kind would not fulfil its functions if it simply acted as a transfer. Is there any reason why this Bill, which admits of Magistrates popularly elected being brought into existence, should not give to them powers to take over the existing functions of the non-elective Magistrates? This is a question which will have to be dealt with in a separate measure. It will have to be decided how far the function and the duty of licensing which is to be transferred shall be displaced by a system giving a larger measure of power to those resident in the locality. I venture humbly to think that the progress of the Bill would have been facilitated by its being made larger and more comprehensive than it is; but I look upon it as a frame upon which a comprehensive plan may be carried out. We have now sufficient experience of the system of popular election in this country to know that it is perfectly safe to apply it to the administration of local affairs. Therefore, I humbly think there is no good ground for the suggestion that this body is not well fitted to discharge all those functions which we suggest should have been given to it. It may be asked why, after this criticism against the Bill—which, however, I hope I have not delivered in a hostile spirit—I concur in the view which is generally taken on this side of the House, that there should not be any opposition to the Second Reading. My answer is, in the first place, that the objectionable features of the Bill to which I have referred may be removed in Committee, and I am not without hope that the Government may still be disposed to make some large concession to the demand from this side of the House in the way of extending the scope and utility of this measure. But if I should be disappointed in this expectation, there is no doubt that this Bill is an important Bill, in so far as it recognizes the great principle of popularly-elected governing bodies for the counties, and I have such faith in the validity and elasticity of that principle, that even if the Bill were to pass in its present form, tied down and unnecessarily fettered as I think that principle is, I feel perfectly certain that the inherent vigour of that principle will very shortly burst all fetters and bonds in this Bill, and its passing even in its present form undoubtedly will facilitate the passing, after the next General Election, of such a supplementary measure as may be necessary to make the reform of Local Government in Scotland most complete, satisfactory and effective.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College Division): There are one or two points on which I should like to say a few words. I do not propose to enter into detail, but shall confine myself to two points of principle, and I think this is the more necessary because we have had a great deal of discussion upon detail, in the course of which the guiding principles of the Bill are rather apt to be lost sight of. My hon. and learned Friend quoted the description of the principle of the Bill which was given by the President of the Local Government Board in a speech he delivered the other day, in which he said that it was a measure intended to transfer powers in counties from the representatives of property to the representatives of all classes. Now, Sir, I hail the Bill with satisfaction because that is its principle. But how is that principle carried out? The object has already been achieved in boroughs in Scotland by the municipal system which has been on its trial for nearly half a century, and which has worked perfectly well, and the most obvious way of carrying out that principle in the counties would simply have been to have extended the principle from the burghs to the counties. If that had been done, the Bill need simply to have been composed of two clauses which would have sufficed to make the transfer. But, besides that, the Bill has had engrafted upon it a number of restrictions, and had my proposal been adopted the result would have been, if these

restrictions were to have been introduced, that the two clauses affecting the transfer of the municipal system would have had to be followed by a long string of clauses placing restrictions on the powers of the new body. There would have been one clause depriving the newly-constituted authority of the power of enrolling the police—a power which the Burgh Authorities possess. There would have been another clause depriving them of the control of the licensing system, which is also possessed by the burghs, and there would have been a further clause super-imposing on them for certain purposes a Committee of the Commissioners of Supply. Now, Sir, I cannot understand why the Government did not take the obvious method of calling into existence this power in the counties, unless they did not wish to set before the people of Scotland in all their nakedness the extensive restrictions which they put on Municipal or County Governing Councils. The Lord Advocate laid down another principle. He said he did not intend to deal with the subject of corrupt practices in these County Council elections, because he thought that to do so would be to encumber the Bill. I quite agree as to the advisability of doing that; but still, if the Lord Advocate had assimilated the system to that found in our municipal bodies in towns, we should then have had one homogeneous system throughout the country. This is an important point of principle, and I think if you analyze the objections taken by Members on this side of the House, you will find that they all resolve themselves into objections of the Bill not having been drafted on the well-understood lines that regulate our municipal system in towns. Objection has been taken to the withdrawal of the police from the control of the Councils, as compared with the municipal powers granted to towns. Then, again, there is the question of licensing. If the right hon. Gentleman had followed the lines of our old burghal system of administration, I think that many of these objections would have disappeared, because they are based on the withdrawal from the body which it is supposed to call into existence, powers which are already entrusted to Municipal Councils. There is another point on which I wish to say a few words, and that is the question of rating. My right hon. Friend the Member for Stirling Burghs suggested that as the rating system proposed by the Lord Advocate is cumbersome and complicated, it might be better to divide the county rates, once and for all, between owners and occupiers exempting leases from the operation of the change. I do not intend to enter into details on this point. I think the Lord Advocate will recognize that the whole system of rating in Scotland is in a state of utter chaos. The Lord Advocate, as a Member of the Committee, which last year sat for many weeks and months to consider this question, will not, I think, deny that the powers of classification and deduction entrusted to the Parochial Boards in Scotland with regard to the incidence of the most important portion of rating in Scotland as between owner and occupier are in a state of utter chaos, varying in almost every parish in Scotland; and, therefore, the time is come when we ought to lay down some general principle to regulate the incidence of rating of all kinds in Scotland. Now, it appears that Parliament has, to a certain extent of late years, established such a principle; it has provided that the rates shall be divided between owner and occupier in certain cases, and following that precedent the educational rating has been divided, and more recently the road rate has been similarly divided. In towns, as the right hon. Gentleman doubtless knows, there is a strong and urgent demand for the division of local and municipal rates between owner and occupier, and it would be a very great comfort and blessing to the country if one principle could be laid down, and advantage taken of the important step which we are about to adopt in reforming County Government, to make some intelligible and simple plan applying to the entire country and to all sorts of rates. It will not make much difference to the occupier in the counties if the present leases are exempted. The amount of the county rates, as compared with the education and other rates, is infinitesimally small. I wish to urge upon the right hon. Gentleman to see whether advantage cannot be taken of the measure he is now introducing to lay down some general and simple principle applicable to all manner of rating, which will put an end

to the utter chaos and confusion which now reign throughout Scotland, especially in the matter of most burdensome rates connected with the education rates and the Poor Law. Now, we want free education. I know the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board cordially told us that he did not agree with free education. There was a certain sum to be allotted to Scotland, to which a certain amount was required for particular grants in relief of local taxation; and he said they were willing to apply the rest in the same direction, but the people of Scotland preferred to have it in the shape of free education, and the Government were quite willing that the money should be appropriated as the people of Scotland wished. Well, Sir, that is all very well; as I say, the people of Scotland want free education, and they want the Government to have backbone enough to give it to them. If they will not give us any more money, let them say they will not give this additional grant to School Boards unless they comply with a condition to give free education and abolish fees. I believe unless you do that you will have a mongrel sort of education, which possesses none of the advantages of free education, and none of the supposed advantages of an education for which the parent has to pay. I would urge the right hon. Gentleman to give us some fuller information both about the educational proposals and the financial proposals of the Government. I do not profess to understand the financial proposals contained in the Bill, and I must say that the Finance Committee of the Glasgow Town Council, whose business it is to study these financial matters, also state that they cannot understand them; therefore we cannot be expected to receive, without considerable discussion, financial proposals so abstruse that those most immediately concerned profess themselves unable to understand them. So far as my constituency is concerned, the matter has been complicated by the action of the Government with respect to the Glasgow Boundaries Commission Bill. It used to be understood on both sides of the House, both by the burghs and by the County Authorities, that some extensive change must take place, and the upset that necessarily follows the financial arrangements under this Bill renders still more unintelligible the unintelligible financial propositions of the Government. If the Glasgow burghs had not been allowed to expect that action would have been taken by the Government on the Commissioners' Report in respect of this boundaries question, they would probably have settled it for themselves by bringing in a private Bill, but they have been staved off, and nothing has been done, in the expectation that the Government would take up the matter. Now, at a critical moment, the Government has left them in the lurch, and when the proper time comes to discuss this point, I and my colleagues certainly intend to do our best to induce the Government to repair the injury which has been caused by allowing this boundaries question to remain unsettled.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to move the Adjournment of the Debate.

Debate further adjourned till Thursday.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (COLOURS) BILL. (No. 238.)

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): The principle objection I have to this Bill is that at 5 minutes to 12 o'clock it is proposed to read it a second time without explanation. One of my hon. Friends is anxious, I know, to make some remarks on certain provisions in this Bill, and as I do not intend myself to enter into the merits of the measure, I will move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the debate be now adjourned."

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: I hope the hon. Member will not press his Motion. The Bill is a very simple one: it simply enacts that merchant ships shall show their National Colours, and I do not imagine there can possibly be any objection to its Second Reading. If the hon. Member or his Friends have any suggestion to make, they can be considered in Committee.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I wish only to point out that exceptionally high penalties are imposed by this Bill.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: That matter can be dealt with in Committee.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the debate be now adjourned."

The House divided:—Ayes 28; Noes 109.—(Div. List, No. 128.)

Original Question again proposed, but, objection being taken to further proceedings, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed on Thursday.

COMMISSIONERS FOR OATHS BILL
(No. 208.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Thursday.

COURT OF SESSION AND BILL CHAMBER (SCOTLAND) CLERKS [SALARIES]. (No. 214.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved:—

That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Salaries of certain Clerks and Officers of the Court of Session and Bill Chamber in Scotland, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to regulate the number and duties of the Clerks of the Court of Session and Bill Chamber in Scotland, and for other purposes.

Resolution to be reported this day, at Two of the clock.

HERRING FISHERY (SCOTLAND) BILL.
(No. 224.)

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I hope the right hon. Gentleman has reconsidered his decision with regard to the extension of this Bill to Ireland. I venture to submit that if the Scotch harbours are closed to steam trawlers and sailing trawlers, they will all go to the Irish coast. We admit that this Bill will be a great boon to Scotland, but how can we be asked to assent to it if the result will be to inflict upon us all the Scotch trawlers, and allow them to prey upon our harbours and fisheries? Our only chance to secure legislation for Ireland is to avail ourselves of English and Scotch legislation. I believe that Sir Thomas Brady, for whom I have the greatest respect, still holds opinions on the trawling questions which scientific evidence has now left high and dry on the shore. I think it is desirable we shall have fuller information on this subject so far as it affects Ireland. I have no desire to offer any opposition to a measure intended for the benefit of Scotch fishermen, but in the interests of Irish fishermen I must object to special advantages being conferred upon the former and not on the latter. As to the mischief done by these trawlers I have heard of enormous quantities of fish spawn being taken up by them and used on the land for manure, instead of remaining in the sea to enrich the deep. Scotchmen have no claim or right to destroy Ireland, and as I think this Bill as at present framed will serious injure Ireland, I move that the Bill be re-committed in order to extend its provisions to Ireland.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be re-committed with respect of Clauses 1, 2, and 6."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. and learned Gentleman is under a misapprehension as to the scope of this Bill, and as to the attitude I have assumed towards it. I did not in the first instance object to its being extended to Ireland; all I asked for was an opportunity of considering the question, and of consulting the Irish Fishery Board. There is always—I think the hon. and learned Gentleman will admit—great difficulty, owing to the difference between the Scotch legal system on the one hand and the English and Irish on the other, in extending to England or Ireland a measure drafted with a view to its application to Scotland alone. I sympathize with the fears of the hon. and learned Member, and agree that it would be a monstrous thing if steam trawlers were driven from Scotland to Ireland. I think the best thing would be to bring in a Bill for Ireland on the lines of the present measure. That would have the effect of avoiding the misfortune which the hon. and learned Gentleman anticipates. There is one point which I wish especially to commend to the notice of the hon. Member. He says that if this Bill passes into law the steam trawlers which now frequent the coast of Scotland will be driven to the Irish coast. If that were so, I admit it would be a real Irish grievance. But what is the existing state of things, irrespective of the amendment of the law proposed by my hon. Friend behind me? Trawling on the coasts of Ireland is now carried on practically by sailors belonging to and manned by Irishmen, and if the pro-

posal of the hon. and learned Member were adopted it would practically destroy this industry.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Not outside the three-mile limit.

MR. BALFOUR: I imagine that a great part of the trawling takes place within the three-mile limit on the West Coast. I think it would be a very serious thing if this House were without grave consideration to destroy a substantial part of an industry which we are specially desirous of fostering—namely, Irish fisheries. The hon. Gentleman has spoken as if science had proved that trawling destroyed the fishing industry; but that has not been the real outcome of scientific research. He speaks of fish spawn being destroyed in great quantities. I believe that it is not the spawn of edible fish which is thus destroyed. I hope the hon. and learned Gentleman will be satisfied with the suggestion I have made after very careful thought, for that seems to me to be the best way out of the difficulty.

*MR. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): I hope the hon. and learned Gentleman will favourably consider the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. I do not think he need be afraid of Scotch trawlers going over to Ireland. The prohibition of trawling by this Bill is very small; it simply prevents it within the three-mile limit, and of that there is at present a very small amount indeed. The Bill, too, will only have the effect of checking steam trawling; it will not interfere with sailing trawling. The House need not be in the least afraid that the spawn of edible sea fish is being destroyed by trawling. It has been proved to demonstration that the spawn of edible sea fish is hatched either floating on the surface or in suspension in the water, except that of herrings and sprats which is generally found on rocky bottoms on where it is impossible to trawl. The spawn which is brought up by trawlers is not that of fish fit for human food, and it does no harm to destroy it. I hope Irish Members will allow this Bill to pass. It is supported by Scotch Members, who have not in recent years at least, been small friends of Ireland, and they hope in a future Parliament to be still greater friends.

MR. P. A. CHANCE (Kilkenny): I do not think that the right hon. Gentleman has answered the speech of my hon. and learned Friend, and in view of the admitted ignorance of the Irish Fishery Board on questions affecting the fisheries especially on the Western Coast, I think we should insist on having further information on the subject.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen): I hope my hon. and learned Friend will not press his Amendment. I am sure the Scotch Members are not willing to inflict any hardship on Ireland, and after the assurance given by the right hon Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, that he will take immediate steps, if found necessary, to prevent any damage being done to Irish Fisheries, I trust the hon. and learned Gentleman will withdraw his Motion. The Bill is one of the greatest importance to Scotland. It deals with a matter that has been before the people for a period of ten years, and there will be the gravest disappointment to them if they are deprived of the benefits of this legislation.

MR. T. M. HEALY: After the expression of opinion which has been given, I do not propose to offer any further opposition. I take it that the pledge of the right hon. Gentleman, who has put down trawling to some extent in Scotland, is that he will bring in a Bill dealing with Ireland, based on the same lines as the Bill introduced by the hon. and gallant Member for Argyleshire, which absolutely prohibits steam trawling. On the faith of that assurance, I ask leave to withdraw the Amendment, and I can only, in conclusion, express the hope that the right hon. Gentleman will bring his influence to bear upon Sir Thomas Brady and induce him to deviate from his opinions on the atrocious system of trawling.

MR. BALFOUR: My proposal is to stop steam trawling, with, of course, powers to the Fishery Board in certain cases to relax the prohibition.

*MR. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will take some steps to secure further information as to the effects of steam trawling on the Irish coasts before he commits himself to any undertaking that he will introduce restrictive legislation on a subject about which there is the greatest variety of opinion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill, as amended, considered.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

METROPOLIS WATER BILL. (No. 57.)

Order for Second Reading, read and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

COUNTY COURT APPEALS (IRELAND) BILL. (No. 241.)

As amended, considered.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to point out the grievance which arises under this Bill. If a judgment is given in a Superior Court it can always be set aside if obtained erroneously, but if in the case of a Civil Bill a judgment is erroneously given, there are absolutely no means of redress. I do, therefore, hope the right hon. Gentleman will accept my Amendment, which has been well considered at a meeting of the Bar in Ireland, and which provides that if a judgment has been obtained in error some means shall be available to set it aside. I wish to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed—

In page 5, line 6, at end of Clause 13, to insert the words "and so much of the ninth section of 'The County Courts Act (Ireland), 1882,' as repealed by the one hundred and twenty-eighth section of the fourteenth and fifteenth years of Victoria, chapter fifty-seven, is hereby repealed"—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I think it would be better to postpone this matter until I have an opportunity of looking into this point.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I shall be willing to take this course.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

Further proceeding deferred till Thursday.

REGISTRATION OF COUNTY ELECTORS (EXTENSION OF TIME) BILL. (No. 210.)

Considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered upon Thursday.

ADVANCE NOTES TO SEAMEN BILL. (No. 222.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; Bill read the third time, and passed.

COAL DUTIES (LONDON) ABOLITION BILL.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [22nd May], "That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

*SIR J. PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): I beg to move that this Bill be referred to a Select Committee of this House. I do so in consequence of the pledge I gave to this House.

An hon. MEMBER objected.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I wish to appeal to my hon. Friend to allow this Bill to go to Committee, in order that the question may be examined judicially. After that has been done it will be in the power of my hon. Friends to raise any objection when the matter again comes before the House. I understand the hon. Baronet will embody in the reference the instructions which I suggested last Wednesday.

*SIR J. PEASE: Certainly, Sir; I shall lay the instruction on the Table of the House, so that hon. Members may have plenty of opportunity of examining it.

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington): I will not oppose this on the distinct understanding that an arrangement will be carried out for renewing the Coal Dues until certain debts have been paid off.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill committed to a Select Committee.

FACTORS ACTS CONSOLIDATION BILL. (No. 80.)

Order for Committee read, and discharged.

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

SAINT GILES' RESTORATION (SCOTLAND), ACT AMENDMENT BILL [*Lords.*]

Read the First Time; to be read a Second Time upon Monday next and to be printed. [Bill 248.]

House adjourned at Five Minutes before One o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 11.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [JUNE 5.

An Asterisk at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

by Contract with H.M.'s Government.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 28th May, 1889.

LORD ASHTOWN.

Report made from the Lord Chancellor that the right of Frederick Oliver Trench Baron Ashtown to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

LORD DUNALLEY.

Report made from the Lord Chancellor, that the right of Henry O'Callaghan Prittie Baron Dunalley to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

WALTHAM ABBEY GUNPOWDER FACTORY BILL. (No. 65.)

Reported without Amendment, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

ADVANCE NOTES TO SEAMEN BILL. (No. 93.)

HERRING FISHERY (SCOTLAND) BILL. (No. 94.)

Read 1ª, and to be printed.

THE FIRE BRIGADE REVIEW.

QUESTIONS.—OBSERVATIONS.

EARL MANVERS: My Lords, seeing the noble Earl who represents the Home Office in his place, I beg to ask him a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, who is responsible for the utter breakdown of the arrangements connected with keeping the ground at the Horse Guards Parade on Saturday afternoon last, on the occasion of the presentation of prizes by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales to the Members of the Fire Brigade, which resulted in a scene of disorder probably unparalleled in London?

EARL BROWNLOW: My Lords, in reply to the question of the noble Lord, I think it is desirable to inform the House exactly what took place on that occasion. On the 11th of May a letter was received from the Chairman of the Committee of the London County Council, informing the First Commissioner of Police that a parade was about to be held of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, and stating that the Queen's Westminster Volunteers would keep the ground, and, as I believe, asking for the co-operation of the Metropolitan Police. My Lords, in consequence of this letter a meeting was arranged between the Chairman of the Committee and Captain Shaw, Colonel Roberts, and Superintendent Fisher. It was held on the 20th of May, and at that meeting it was arranged that the Queen's Westminster Volunteers should keep the ground. It was further distinctly arranged that the action of the police was to be the same as that which they had always undertaken for a number of years at the Queen's Birthday parade in the morning at the Horse Guards. That duty of the police consisted in keeping order among the crowd, and in keeping open the communication to and from the Horse Guards Parade, in the rear of the corps that is keeping the ground. The usual number of police was sent down to the ground,

and it was sufficient for keeping order among the crowd, and for keeping open communications in the rear, but it was not sufficient naturally for keeping the ground over that very large space. My Lords, that is exactly what happened, and I can only say that I very much regret that, owing to the arrangements for keeping the ground not having been satisfactory, some inconvenience and annoyance was caused to the Prince and Princess of Wales by the pressure of the crowd. I should like, however, to read a sentence from the Report of the Chief Commissioner of Police, who says:—

"I cannot close my remarks without paying a tribute to the loyal behaviour of the crowd which filled the Parade. The crowd was thoroughly good humoured and orderly, and their loyalty certainly showed itself in enthusiastic cheers for the Royal personages who were present."

VISCOUNT HARDINGE: What strikes me as the most extraordinary thing in this case is that when it was seen that the Volunteers were perfectly powerless to keep back the mob, the Life Guards or the Blues were not ordered out. I recollect an incident very much of the same character, where a crowd broke through the Volunteers who were unable to keep the ground, and the Life Guards were ordered out to drive back the people. I only mention this that in future orders may be given to hold troops in readiness should the police or the Volunteers fail to keep back the crowd. I do not think that the Volunteers are the proper body for keeping ground, as they cannot be expected to act with the strictness which it may be necessary to use, and I hope it will be the last occasion on which Volunteers will be so employed.

HORSEFLESH (SALE FOR FOOD) BILL. (No. 88.)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

LORD LAMINGTON: My Lords, before the Bill is read a third time, I should like to ask when the Government are going to carry out their promise to grant a Select Committee on the whole subject of the sale of food?

*EARL FORTESCUE: My Lords, I would not, during the passing of this beneficent measure, run any risk of impeding it by addressing you upon it at an earlier stage, but in this, the last stage, I would wish to lay before your Lordships an aspect of this Bill, which I do not think has been presented to your Lordships, or, indeed, as far as I am aware, to the English public generally. Some 25 or 30 years ago I was very much struck with the words of a French writer on the subject. I forget at the moment who he was, but the words remained vividly impressed upon my memory. He began by saying—

"Without the recognition of horseflesh as food for man, the old or disabled horse becomes a melancholy form of capital, wasting away day by day under the pitiless lash of his driver."

He then goes on to show how the recognition of horseflesh as food for man soon causes a point to be reached when it becomes more remunerative to feed the animal up for meat than to extract the last particle of work from him by blows while he is kept in a state of starvation, as the French author said, a living but suffering skeleton. I congratulate the authors of this measure, and those who have so earnestly pressed it on to its last stage on having rendered a far more substantial service to the cause of humanity than has been rendered by many sensational writers and eloquent orators on behalf of suffering animals.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: Your Lordships will remember that suggestions were made upon which I have to propose several verbal Amendments. You will remember that Clause 1 was retained, and the previous words with regard to registration struck out. Then I propose to insert words under which the Bill will come into operation on the 29th September next, instead of 1st January.

Read 3ª (according to order), with the Amendments; further Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

BRITISH MISSIONARIES IN EAST AFRICA.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT HALIFAX: My Lords, I desire to call the attention of your Lordships' House to the serious state of affairs on the East Coast of Africa, and to the serious danger to which the British missionaries in Eastern Africa will be exposed by hostile operations on the part of the German East African Company against Pangani, or against the

inhabitants of other places in that part of Africa; and I have to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what steps he proposes to adopt to avert that danger. I hope the noble Marquess at the head of Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to take the necessary steps for the preservation of the English missionaries on the coast from the great dangers to which they are exposed in consequence of the hostile operations against Pangani and Tanga. In bringing this matter forward, I ask that indulgence from your Lordships' House, which I believe, is always extended to anyone who addresses your Lordships for the first time. I desire to occupy your Lordships' attention for as short a time as possible, but it is necessary that I should state very briefly how the present crisis, which so seriously threatens the lives of Englishmen, has been brought about. Not everyone of your Lordships, perhaps, may be aware how much has been done to promote good government and civilization, and to develop commercial enterprize at Zanzibar by the late Sultan, who died last year, under the influence and the guidance of Sir John Kirk, till recently Her Majesty's Consul General at Zanzibar. As compared with the state of things described by Captain Burton 20 years before, a complete transformation has been effected in the social, material, and political aspect of that part of Africa. Such, at least, is the evidence of the distinguished African traveller, Mr. Joseph Thomson, in an article which appeared in the February number of the "Contemporary Review." Life and property are secure; the missionaries hardly think it necessary to close their doors at night; the whole character of the slave trade is altered, and its worst features have been put down. The Arabs are getting accustomed to the idea of free labour, and trade, which is almost entirely in the hands of British residents, has increased in a remarkable degree. From quite an insignificant amount 20 years ago, the trade has been raised to the annual value of something little short of two millions sterling. So much, my Lords for the material condition of the country. But the religious and moral prospects of the country are no less encouraging. Some of your Lordships may remember the first beginnings and subsequent history of the mission which, about 28 years ago, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge sent out to Zanzibar and the interior of the country. Those of your Lordships who are acquainted with the history of that mission will, I am sure, bear me out when I say that it is impossible to find a nobler record of work done for God, or with a more absolute and entire sacrifice of self, than is to be found in the history of that mission. My Lords, the Universities gave of their best; they grudged neither men nor money. These men, who were known to us at school and college, gave up everything—home, friends, and prospects—to throw themselves into this work, and some of them have sacrificed their lives to it. They have succumbed to the climate—among them two of the Bishops who headed the mission; but their places were taken by others, and the result is—the Established Church, the Free Church in Scotland, and the Church Missionary and London Mission Societies, having followed in the steps of the Universities' mission—that the east part of Africa is covered with mission stations, and an example has been set of which England has every reason to be proud. How great that work has been may be judged from the words of Mr. Joseph Thomson, who is certainly anything but a favourable witness where missionary work is concerned—

> "The missionaries," says Mr. Thomson, in his article in the *Contemporary Review*, "have undoubtedly raised the moral level of thousands with whom they have come in contact; they have made the name of Englishman revered and admired throughout the length and breadth of East Central Africa, and they have raised unbounded confidence in his word and good intentions."

But that is not all. In the recent troubles arising out of the German occupation, and while the Germans themselves have been in deadly conflict with the natives, the English, by common consent of Arabs and negro tribes alike, have been suffered to go to and fro between Zanzibar and the interior, it being openly declared by an excited population up in arms that this is owing to the value attached to the presence and work of the missionaries, and to the appreciation of the pure and devoted lives of the men they have watched so long and trusted so

thoroughly. It should always be remembered that in all this civilizing work, England, with the exception of a French mission, which has also done excellent service, has been the sole agent; so that I think there is every reason for the stongest intervention on the part of Her Majesty's Government in the circumstances which I will proceed to lay before the House. I desire to speak with every consideration for the difficulties of the present situation, and the susceptibilities of others; but facts are facts; and if justice is to be done, they must be stated. Unfortunately for the Sultan of Zanzibar and his subjects, unfortunately for the African tribes in the interior, unfortunately for the mission, and unfortunately, as I think, for themselves, the Germans in 1888 embarked in their colonization scheme for East Africa. That scheme was part of the "scramble" for Africa which, since 1884, has, so little to their credit, been displayed by the nations of Europe. The immediate result of that scheme of colonization was the violation on the part of Germany of all the rights of the Sultan of Zanzibar, who was forced to sign concessions greatly against his own interests, and who eventually found himself deprived of great portions of territory over which he had claimed authority. Large tracts in the interior were declared to be within the sphere of German influence, while within the limited region still left to him two-thirds of the coast line nearest to Zanzibar, including the access to our missionary stations, is to be administered by the German East African Company. The remaining third, but which is quite outside the sphere occupied by the missions, is to be administered in the same way by an English company, the country behind it being declared to be under British influence. Now, my Lords, I am compelled to ask, in the first place, by what right powerful European countries should portion out in that way large tracts of country that do not belong to them? Are they entitled to do so merely because they are more civilized and powerful than those with whom they come in contact? Can the fact that the authority claimed is indefinite in its character affect in the slightest degree the justice of the transaction? And then, secondly, if limits are to be traced and boundaries fixed, why are all the arrangements made without the representatives of the mission being permitted to know what is going on? Why is the mission allowed suddenly to find itself transferred from the sphere of British influence and handed over to the German East African Company, whose ideas of liberty and the rights of individuals are entirely different from those current among Englishmen, and that, too, when a slight alteration in the boundary, which would have left the Germans in possession of a road to Kilima-Njaro, might have prevented, even if nothing else had been done, the particular sources of danger to which the mission is now exposed? Without, however, pressing these questions, what cannot be denied is that the consequences of the arrangements are agreed to have been disastrous. The Sultan, with the loss of his territory, lost also his influence; the mode in which the German East African Trading Company proceeded to carry out their settlement was aggressive in the extreme; and the Arabs and the negro tribes made common cause and rose up in arms against them. It soon became apparent that what was left of the Sultan's authority on the coast would not be recognized by either Arab or negro if he continued his arrangements with the company, and that the company, without armed intervention, could not hope to re-establish themselves in any coast town. Trade ceased altogether, security for life and property disappeared, and the present state of affairs is this, that the German Government, though it has censured the conduct of the colonists, is now engaged in a struggle for the re-occupation of a territory out of which the lawful owners have been partly cajoled and partly threatened, and of which the new owners have never at any time had more than a nominal possession. All that, as your Lordships will see, is not enough; but, bad as it is, the position of affairs becomes infinitely worse when England, under the plea of assisting in an attempt to put down the slave trade, is induced to join in a naval blockade against the transport of slaves and munitions of war along the whole coast. But, my Lords, whatever it may have been with us, the primary object of tha blockade was not the suppression o the slave trade with others. Those wh o

know Africa best are unanimous that it could affect the evils of the slave trade only in the very slightest degree; in some respects, indeed, it has increased them. It has inflicted untold miseries on the natives. The object of the blockade was to assert the alleged rights and repair the failure of the German East African Company; and what it has done has been to inflict untold miseries, not only on the so-called insurgent towns, but on the innocent tribes of the interior, who, being deprived of their supply of firearms and gunpowder, are at the mercy of their marauding neighbours—miseries which we might have prevented, but instead have rendered possible by our co-operation with Germany. Hitherto, while the Germans have never met with any encouragement from the natives, Englishmen have been received everywhere with open arms. Now they are both being classed together as the natural enemies of the black man. I have said enough to put your Lordships in possession of the present position of affairs. The immediate peril to the mission which results from that position of affairs, if the East African Company, as they threaten to do, attack Pangani and Tanga, both of them within 30 miles of the mission stations, and by which access is obtained to them from the coast, is most grave and imminent. We may have the most serious news at any moment, for it is expected that Lieutenant Wissmann, who commands the German forces, will commence operations against those places at the close of the rainy season, and if he does, such an attack may very probably lead to a general massacre, which will sweep away the whole of the missions and missionaries together. It is to meet this peril, if indeed it be not too late, that I have brought the matter before the attention of your Lordships' House, and I would ask Her Majesty's Government, with all the earnestness of which I am capable, what steps they are preparing to take in order to avert it? The missionaries desire no interference on their behalf with either the Arabs or the negroes, but they do expect, and those who are interested in their welfare have a right to claim for them, that the Government at home shall use all the influence which diplomacy can exert to protect them and the people among whom they have been working for so long, from the consequences of the action of another European Power. It seems to me that prompt and vigorous action is required from all those who are interested in the welfare of the African people, and who have the safety of the missions and the honour of England at heart. I think, and I trust your Lordships will agree with me, that the time has come when a strong protest should be addressed without delay to the German Government against the threatened attack on Pangani and Tanga. My Lords, I think it might be represented to Prince Bismarck that such an attack must go far to destroy the fruits of the devoted labours of British missionaries, which, during 25 years, have cost this country most valuable lives and large sums of money, and must place the lives of the missionaries themselves in the gravest peril; that if any serious catastrophe, arising from the conduct of the German company, should occur, the feeling of indignation in England is likely to be so strong that it would make any co-operation with Germany in maintaining the blockade impossible; and that the German Government might therefore be asked to take immediate and effective action to restrain the company from undertaking military operations against Pangani and Tanga, or in any other place where they were likely to expose the missionaries to danger. My Lords, it does not appear to me that such remonstrances need be the less firm and decided because they are made in the most friendly and conciliatory spirit. We should, as it seems to me, frankly admit the very serious difficulties in which the German company have found itself placed, and we should express a most sincere desire to afford it every help in our power in endeavouring to extricate itself by peaceful means from the difficulties by which it is surrounded. What has already taken place on the African Coast, and in view of the present state of feeling of the native population, makes it impossible that peace and order can be re-established among them by force of arms without an expenditure of lives and money altogether out of proportion to any benefit that can be derived from it. My Lords, I think this state of things is also a proof of

the evils resulting from conferring powers of government and administration on trading companies, as distinct from facilities for commercial enterprize. Your Lordships will remember that in 1833, when the Act for renewing the charter of the East Indian Company was passed, the company was prohibited from engaging in the future in any mercantile transaction, on the ground that it was not expedient to allow a body of traders to exercise the powers of government. The German company, if its attentions were confined to agriculture and commerce, might prove successful in deriving a profit from its operations; but the success of trade and agriculture is impossible without peace and order and the goodwill of the population, and all hope of these, for the present at least, has been lost by the harsh way in which the powers which the Sultan of Zanzibar was made to concede to them have been exercised, especially by the way in which duties on imports have been levied. This feeling of hostility to the company will certainly not be removed by further warlike proceedings, and while it lasts, neither agriculture nor commerce can be carried on with profit. Nor is it more likely that the company, after paying for the cost of maintaining its authority by force of arms, will realize a revenue by taxation which will afford the means of paying an interest on the capital of the shareholders. Considerations such as these, which are in the interests of the Germans themselves, might surely be submitted to Prince Bismarck, and might lead not only to such steps in the immediate present as are required to insure the safety of our missionaries, but to further arrangements in the future, to the great benefit of Africa and of commercial enterprize generally. Without entering, however, into these larger matters, I will only repeat that I earnestly hope, whatever else may be done or left undone, Her Majesty's Government will at once address an energetic protest to the German Government against the proposed attack on Pangani and Tanga. If that duty be not performed, and a disaster should be suffered by the British missionaries, I am convinced a very deep feeling of indignation will be aroused throughout the country. It has, indeed, been suggested that in order to avoid the dangers hanging over them the missionaries should withdraw, but I do not think that any Member of this House would endorse such advice. Danger is no reason why the missionaries should withdraw. It is a reason why they should stay. It is not necessary to save one's life, but it is necessary to save it from dishonour. The missionaries cannot—they will not—abandon their converts, and leave them exposed to what is worse than death, the danger of apostasy. The Bishop writes in the most explicit terms to say:—

> "We should consider it the gravest dereliction of duty and disgraceful to us as Christians and missionaries to abandon the native Christians, and under no circumstances can we consent to do so."

He and his clergy and the staff of the missions will remain at their posts, and, if need be, die at them. If they do they will have done their duty, and they will reap their reward; and I, for one, shall pity only those who, directly or indirectly, are responsible for a state of things which has produced such a wrong to our own country, such misfortune to Africa, and so great a disgrace to the English name.

*THE BISHOP OF LONDON: I shall not take up very much of the time of your Lordships' House, but I wish to strongly emphasize the fact which has been so plainly pointed out by the noble Viscount, that it is absolutely impossible the missionaries should be withdrawn from their posts. It is not as if they had just gone there and were beginning their work. They have won a large number of converts; they have lived among those people and conciliated their affections; and it would be quite impossible for them in the hour of danger to withdraw without doing spiritual mischief such as it was impossible for ministers of the Gospel to contemplate. Any advice that might be given to the missionaries to withdraw from their posts would, I am certain, be quite useless, and, indeed, such advice ought not to be given. The circumstances are such as to make it imperative upon them to stay. My Lords, I do not venture to enter into details as to what should be done in this matter. I have the greatest confidence in the Government, and believe that they earnestly desire to see that right is done; but I think it might assist them in doing right if they were

supported by a strong feeling in the country that every effort should be used to maintain peace in Zanzibar. If it be possible to put a stop to warlike operations, if the Government have it in their power by any means whatever to prevent or diminish bloodshed—and it is no ordinary bloodshed that is likely to result from the continuance of such warlike operations as are threatened—I would press upon the Government that the effort is a duty which they owe to both the interest and the honour of England.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE: My Lords, I cannot help adding my voice to the appeals which have been made to the Government in this matter. I do not think there can be anything of much more importance in the interest of humanity than for us to do something now, if it be possible, towards paying the debt we owe to Africa for the wrongs we have done her for so many generations. I feel, my Lords—as indeed I am sure you must all feel—that it is a terrible reproach to European civilization, and to the Christian name, that apparently we cannot come into contact with savage tribes without doing them harm and wrong. My Lords, we have been for some time past endeavouring to repair the many wrongs we have done these people by all the means in our power. There is every ground for confidence that the efforts which are being made to carry civilization and the Gospel into the interior of Africa from the east coast will be successful in achieving a very great work if they are not interfered with. All the accounts which have reached us of the conduct of the noble band of men who have been engaged in that work, not only evoke the strongest sympathies of us all in the great work they are doing, but create the greatest confidence that, unless something is done to frustrate their work, it will bring blessing to Africa. Not much more than a year ago we had accounts of the devotion not only of the English missionaries, but of young men, their converts—Africans, negroes—who had been sent out, had stood the fire of a cruel persecution, and had suffered torture and death with a fortitude equal to that of the primitive Christian martyrs. The account of those young negro men who died by torture rather than do base and vicious acts at the command of the barbarous chieftain of the country in which they lived, was, I think, equal to any heroism that we can read of in history. I am sure that the work which is going on, so great and promising as it is, cannot fail to receive the respect and sympathy of all. Germans are now, by their military operations, in danger of counteracting this work in that region, in which they may be said to have first begun it; for it happens that about 50 years ago the first explorers of that region were two German missionaries, named Kraps and Isenberg. If the dangers now threatening this good cause were thoroughly understood by the German Government, I feel sure they would take means to compel their citizens to limit their warlike operations in the interest of humanity.

*THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I am unwilling to detain you by anything I can say in this matter lest I should take away from the effect which the eloquent yet cautious appeals made to your Lordships must produce. I can only add my testimony to what has been said, having been lately engaged in looking through the history of the work done by the missions. I must bear my testimony to the fact that the noble Viscount has made his statement upon the work of the missions without exaggeration, and that he has understated rather than overstated the good effected. The knowledge of this work has penetrated this whole country. I am sure I do not exaggerate when I say that a deep feeling of thankfulness has taken possession of all for the work done by these African missions. It was only last week that St. Paul's was filled with an immense congregation at a week-day morning service, and meetings equally crowded were held in the afternoon and evening to listen to addresses upon this subject from people who knew what they were saying. It is, I agree with the speakers who have already addressed your Lordships, altogether impossible that these benefactors of Africa can withdraw one foot. They have not only been doing their work as clergymen and civilizers, but they have already succeeded in planting settlements over a great tract of African Continent, and are moving onward in a new path. My Lords, if they were to withdraw, or were even advised to withdraw, this would be a thing unparalleled in the whole

history of Christianity. Such a work, such a mission, has never been withdrawn from yet by the Church for fear of danger. My Lords, I should like to point out that the danger is not merely the general danger which women, children, and missionaries are likely to suffer when a general state of warlike agitation exists in the country. All are of course placed in a position of danger. But there are distinct, definite dangers to which the very work that has been done peculiarly exposes these missions and converts. At this moment the news of the expected onset of war is travelling inland like a great wave rushing onwards among all the tribes of that part of Africa. When war does break out it is quite certain that the tribes of the interior will come pouring down, and making no distinction, will look upon all white faces as the faces of enemies. But, my Lords, there is another great danger which exists in the very excellence of the buildings which the missionaries have erected. Almost the only solid, substantial buildings in the districts are those which have been erected at these missions. The missionaries have built great granite churches, huge rectangular buildings and courts of all kinds for the purpose of carrying on their civilizing work. There is the definite certainty that those substantial buildings must be occupied by belligerents, either invaders or invaded, and they will be made the basis of operations if warfare begins at all. That, therefore, is a great danger to be avoided. There can be no doubt that the first burst of assault on either side will be delivered on the homes of the missionaries. It is not merely, therefore, protection of their persons that is wanted. If they were withdrawn, or if they removed in order to be taken care of, a great obstacle would be laid in the path of Christianity. It would be felt that these missionaries who came there with professions of love and zeal for the welfare of the African people were ready to desert their fellow Christians whom they had made believers, and to take care of themselves in the hour of danger. My Lords, I am sure there is an intense feeling throughout the country, which is deepening every day, a trust that some arrangement may be made between the German and the English Governments by which, in the first instance, the persons of the missionaries and their people might be protected, and, in the second, the whole cause saved from destruction.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I much wish that the notice of the noble Viscount had indicated more fully the subject matter he intended to bring before us, because he has mixed up with the matter indicated in his notice—that of immediate danger to the missionaries — many controverted questions with which it is impossible to deal unless sufficient notice has been given. There are questions of diplomacy which could not be raised in the absence of some of those who are largely responsible for what has passed. I am not prepared to give to the noble Lord's account of those transactions that testimony for accuracy which the most rev. Prelate has given to his account of the condition of the Universities mission. There are many points in respect of which I should challenge his account of the past. For instance, he spoke of German colonization having begun in 1888. I cannot follow his chronology, for it began with the German Protectorate in 1884. Negotiations went on at the end of Earl Granville's time, during the time I was at the Foreign Office, and during Lord Rosebery's time, and the line which the noble Lord alluded to, settling the limits of German and of English influence, was drawn about two months after Lord Iddesleigh came into office. No doubt this is a subject suitable for discussion; there are a great many interesting questions raised by it; but it is a subject which can only be examined by the light of the correspondence, if we had it in our hands, and which cannot be properly dealt with without any notice that it would be the subject of special consideration. We must draw a line at the time when the Germans became, by International Law, practically masters of the territory in question. The procedure by which they became masters of it is, of course, open to comment and discussion and to the examination of any responsibility that any Minister of the Crown may have had. When once we pass the time at which agreements were made and this territory had become to all intents and purposes German territory, it is then merely confusing the question to mix up the consideration as

to how that territory was acquired with the events that subsequently occurred. Again, I must take exception to the terms in which the noble Lord described the blockade. He rather intimated that the two Powers which had undertaken it had done so without any intention to suppress the slave trade. I do not think there is the slightest foundation for such an insinuation. I believe that during the time the blockade has lasted the slave trade has been absolutely stopped; many hundred dhows have been searched; and in not more than one has any trace of the slave trade been discovered. The slave trade across the water has been absolutely stopped by these operations. Of course, you cannot stop a great crime of this kind without irritating the criminals. You must give up all hope of ever arresting this terrible scourge if you are to be deterred by the fear of what may be done by those who set it on foot and who get their living by it. You must brave their wrath if you are to carry your efforts to a successful conclusion. But the matter which is the subject of the noble Lord's question, and which, I think, is a proper subject for our consideration, has nothing to do with the original acquisition of the German territory. When the strip of coast was taken possession of by the German company it was terribly mismanaged. Great mistakes were made, and the result was a rising among the Mahomedans principally, aided by many natives, and this caused a vast calamity. If the noble Lord asks for our regret for that, we give it earnestly, but it is not we who caused the calamities. We had nothing to do with the conduct of the colonizing operations; we were not responsible for the mistakes that occurred or the calamities that followed them. Now, we are in the presence of this state of facts. The German Government say that for the sake of their military honour, for the sake of their colonial interests, for the sake of the rights they have acquired, it is essential to them as a nation to re-establish their supremacy upon those points of the coast where they have been defeated, and it is at their expense and under their authority that the operations are being conducted. The result of those military operations, which are just like any other military operations, which are as defensible or as indefensible as any other act of war, has been to cause a natural feeling of violent excitement and perturbation throughout the surrounding country—an awakening of animosities and quarrels and race hatreds, creed hatreds, and hatreds arising from prejudices. That state of things is not, of course, peculiar to those military operations; it is the same in any operations that may be conducted against any nation on any uncivilized coast—in any we may have conducted in the east or the south, just as much as in those conducted by the Germans. But most unhappily at a station not far from the coast there is established the Universities mission, which is maintained by Bishop Smythies and a devoted following from the Universities. I most freely and earnestly subscribe to all that has been said by the previous speakers in praise of the splendid self-denial of those men. It is impossible to speak of their high duties and action with too great enthusiasm. Whether they have on this occasion adopted a right course of conduct I very much doubt. They were warned by the Consul General in August last that their position was dangerous, aud that they had better withdraw in time. They were warned again in November, they were warned again in April, and I believe they have just been warned once more. But to all those warnings they have turned a deaf ear. They said a higher duty than any earthly prudence impelled them to remain where they were. It is impossible to praise too highly the spirit which dictates such conduct, but the position of the secular authorities becomes embarrassing in the extreme. Every British subject has a right to appeal to the British Authorities to do all they can to protect him, to save his life and liberty, to rescue him in any difficulties. But as a corresponding duty he must conform to the advice of the secular authority to which he appeals; and this is what the missionaries decline to do. In those circumstances, they declining to move from this agitated district in the presence of great, immediate, but only temporary danger, and their friends at the same time here calling on the British Authorities to protect them, we are placed in a position which, I think, any one who will consider it calmly must acknowledge to be

one in which we ought not to be placed. I do not believe that, if I may express my opinion on so great a question, it is an article of Christian duty to remain unnecessarily in the presence of danger which by reasonable precaution might be avoided. I do greatly honour the motives of the men doing those things, but I cannot honestly say that I think they have taken the wisest, best, and most Christian course. The noble Lord calls upon us to rescue them. How are we to do it? We cannot despatch an army. I do not suppose the noble Lord will recommend us to send the Mediterranean fleet to stop these operations. But he recommends us to try the exhortations of diplomacy. Does any one who has paid any attention to diplomatic history seriously think that the considerations on which the noble Lord dwelt with so much eloquence, passion, and evident sincerity have not been weighed by the men who are responsible for this conduct; and that coming from us, they will have the power of turning back the strong motives which are expressed in the words "military honour and Imperial necessity"? I can only say that heart and mind I am most earnestly with everything said by the noble Lords who have spoken; and whatever may be the subject matter of their recommendations the mere authority of the two right rev. Prelates and the noble Lords who spoke is enough to cause me to make earnest representations to the German Government. This I shall do, being urged to it by their representations and their high authority. But I do not for a moment say that I believe it is in the power of any diplomatic exhortation, or any exhortation of a higher kind than diplomatic, to put a stop to those military operations. The only sound, proper, and genuine way for the missionaries to reconcile their Christian duty with the danger in front of which they find themselves, and the only way to avert calamities, which will be heartrending to all who hear of them in this land, and which will give a terrible blow to the progress of Christian missions, is for them to withdraw for a time, for a brief time, in presence of a danger which is the necessary result of military operations, and which will disappear when those military operations are at an end. My voice is not strong enough to reach them. I have done my best, and I shall earnestly impress any possible precautions in this matter on the German Government. I trust that those devoted men may not suffer a fate which I cannot but feel that their own imprudent conduct has to some extent courted.

The Archbishop of Canterbury

PUBLIC WORKS AT CAPE TOWN.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: My Lords, I rise to move for all the correspondence that has passed between the Colonial Office and the Cape of Good Hope Government since November last with reference—first, to the continuation of the Cape Town Railway to Simon's Town; secondly, to the extension of the works connected with the docks in Table Bay. Your Lordships are well aware that a railway from Cape Town to Simon's Town, affording means of access to and fro, is a work of the greatest importance to the colony, and one involving no very great expense. You are aware also that our own Imperial interests are very considerable there, because it is the only station which we have for our ships; for, although there is some harbour accommodation at Table Bay, we have really no accommodation there for men-of-war. At Simon's Bay we have already laid out considerable sums, and it is for the purpose of protecting this sole harbour which we have for our ships on the East Coast that we ask for this railway. I believe that a small railway comes down for about seven miles from Simon's Town, but for commercial purposes it is utterly insufficient, and the sole purpose for which the railway has been commenced is to place Simon's Town in communication with our important station in that part of Africa. In 1884, when Lord Hartington was Secretary of State for War, a Report was made on our Colonial Stations, and in that Report I think your Lordships will find that Simon's Bay is stated to be a most important coaling station. It is considered in the same light of importance as any station in the Indian Seas. I may mention that with regard to Table Bay, the sum asked for was £92,000. The large docks, which did not exist a few years ago, have been constructed by the Colonial Government; and Her Majesty's Government, having no dockyard in that part, and

having no means whatever of accommodation for ships except that station, have availed themselves of those docks for the purpose of repairing several of Her Majesty's ships. In view of the accommodation, it seems to me not at all unreasonable that the Colonial Government should ask for the comparatively small sum of £92,000 to enable them to complete the works. Contingencies may arise—though I hope they may never do so—in which the opportunity of using those stations for Imperial purposes would be very valuable, and I raise my humble protest against any policy which would tend to alienate us from our fellow subjects at the Cape. The Cape stations have acquired—in the eyes of military and naval men—a greater importance than they possessed in past years, because it is necessary to keep that route to India open in the event of the Suez Canal being stopped at any time. Naval and military experts all agree that the Cape station is one that must be maintained, seeing its value as a coaling station. I am informed that the Cape Government have determined, in consequence, as they state, of having had very little notice taken of the complaints which they have addressed to Her Majesty's Government, to complete the works at this station themselves, and they have recently passed a Vote providing that the work shall be completed at their own expense. I hope that the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies will lay on the Table the correspondence which has passed between the Colonial Office and the Cape Government since last November, so that we may see whether the statements to which I have referred are correct or not. I therefore move for that correspondence.

Moved—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for all correspondence that has passed between the Colonial Office and the Cape of Good Hope Government since last November with reference—first, to the continuation of the Cape Town Railway to Simon's Town; secondly, to the extension of the works connected with the docks in Table Bay."—(*The Viscount Sidmouth.*)

*LORD KNUTSFORD: My Lords, in answer to the question put by the noble Viscount, I am told that no correspondence has passed between the Cape Government and the Colonial Office since November, and therefore I am unable to to lay any Papers on the Table. I do not know to what the noble Viscount referred when he alluded to some complaint on the part of the Cape Government that their applications have been unanswered. The last application which was made by the Agent General in 1888, and a Paper has been presented to Parliament which contains the answer of the Colonial Office to that application. That answer was given on the 23rd of March, 1888, and it shows that Her Majesty's Government are fully alive to the importance of the question of the defence of the Cape. Her Majesty's Government have already expended, or undertaken to spend, £82,000 on guns and special fittings for Table Bay; and, besides that, they have already spent in Simon's Bay, or undertaken to spend, something like £48,000. Therefore, I think it is going outside the mark to say that the Government are not aware of, and did not fully recognize, the importance of defending Table Bay and Simon's Bay. The Government also recognize fully the good work which the Colonial Government have done in respect of Table Bay; and I think they have shown their interet in that work by proceeding on the same lines with the Cape Government as they have with all other Colonial Governments—that is to say, that the local Government shall do the work and that the Imperial Government shall provide the armaments. That has been carried out in the case of the Cape Government. But, as I have said, there is no correspondence to lay on the Table.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: We have been expecting communications to arrive.

*LORD KNUTSFORD: I can only say that no communications have arrived.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: Then I withdraw my application.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE BILL. (No. 78.)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

*LORD ADDINGTON: My Lords, I desire to make a few observations upon this measure. I regard the Probate Duty as indefensible and unstatesman-

like. The rule laid down by Adam Smith was that taxation should be levied according to a man's means and in the mode that is most convenient to him; but what can be more inconvenient than to tax the children of a deceased father with 4 per cent, which is to be provided out of the corpus? When the Probate Duty was introduced it was considered in its right character as simply giving to the person in charge of the probate the right to administer the property. But successive Ministers have turned it into a method of extortion, and the original 10s. stamp for probates of any value has grown up to its present proportions of 4 per cent *ad valorem*. I earnestly refer your Lordships to the practice of that great authority upon taxation, Mr. Pitt? The probate then charged was simply the stamps upon certificates granting to the person making probate the right to administer the property. Pitt carefully abstained from taxing wives or children, because a wife is entitled to provision and the children are the natural heirs who have a right to their father's patrimony. The national income ought to be derived from individual incomes, according to the means of the individuals. Through the probate you tax at the most inconvenient time, and in the most inconvenient manner. This increase in the Death Duties is open to many objections. The Death Duties have been described as a charge upon accumulation; they act also upon property depressed by low rents and diminished prices. This increased taxation will fall upon landed property at a time, when, owing to agricultural depression its real value has been very greatly depreciated. There are hundreds of properties throughout the country which, owing to the extreme depression, have been so diminished in their productive value; that they hardly yield enough to pay the interest on mortgages, and yet those properties are to be still further diminished by this tax. Is not that a cruelty? With his property probably mortgaged up to the hilt what is a man to do? I say that it is difficult to conceive anything more monstrous in the present state of the agricultural interest, than the imposition of this tax in the case of properties which have either come down in value by inherited burthens or grown up by accumulation. I hold that this is a tax which is wholly indefensible, and I enter my most solemn protest against this kind of legislation, which is entirely antagonistic to the best teachings of political economy. Those who are responsible for it do not follow the principles of Adam Smith, and their legislation is at variance with the views alike of the greatest writers on political economy, and of the ablest financiers.

THE EARL OF FEVERSHAM: My Lords, I hope the time will never come when this House will give merely a formal assent to measures of this description. In the financial arrangements of the Government the Chancellor of the Exchequer has, on the whole, been very successful in his general policy; but at the same time, I cannot but regret that he has not been more successful in relation to those taxes which press more or less upon the agricultural interest. I agree with much that has fallen from the noble Lord who has just spoken. I think this tax will fall with undue heaviness on the agricultural interest, and will practically result in an increase of taxation on land. The landed interest is, on the contrary, entitled to relief from taxation, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted last year by his proposed van and horse tax. I hope the van and horse tax will be re-introduced, or that Her Majesty's Government will find some other substitute to relieve the taxation falling on land. I also regret the proposed increase in the duty on beer. The increase is not great, but small matters of this kind are very irritating. The right hon. Gentleman has invited the County Councils throughout the country to express their opinions upon the matter. Some of them have expressed their opinions, and others have not. At the same time, I think they all more or less unite in the hope that some substitute may be found for the taxation falling on land. It is always with reluctance that I differ from proposals put forward by the head of Her Majesty's Government; but I cannot help asserting that, instead of increasing the taxation on the landed interest, as is now proposed, what is wanted is some scheme that will carry out the promise of the Government made last year with regard to relieving that taxation.

Lord Addington

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I fully agree with my noble Friends that the Death Duties are a bad tax, but every tax may be so described. Money has, however to be got, and the question that has to be solved by Her Majesty's Government is not as to finding an ideal tax, but as to what tax is the least undesirable under the circumstances which surround us. My noble Friend, Lord Addington, referred to high authorities, but I am afraid he must admit that the current of authority is against any large increase of indirect taxation. I cannot agree with the noble Lord's views as to income tax. It is not wise on every exigency to resort to an increase of the income tax. The foundation of that tax was that its imposition was to be a great financial resource in cases of national emergency. If any great trouble was to come upon us, as long as the income tax is kept low in ordinary times, we shall have in it enormous resources at our command. On the general ground of policy, therefore, I think it would be unwise to force that tax too high. It has been urged that this Budget will press very heavily on land. But it is difficult to see why Death Duties should press unduly on the agricultural interest. The accumulations to be dealt with at death far oftener take the form of personalty than of land, and it is calculated that this tax will bring in far more from personalty than from land. With regard to the horse and van tax of last year, to which reference has been made, it is to be regretted that that tax did not commend itself to public opinion, but it must be borne in mind that it met with severe criticism from many of those who represented the agricultural interest. If the County Councils express themselves in favour of these taxes, they will not find the Chancellor of the Exchequer disinclined to push them forward; but if both the County Councils and the agricultural interest are opposed to them, I am afraid they would not have friends enough to secure their acceptance by the Legislature. My Lords, my only apology for this tax is that money was required for a great purpose, and there was no other way of obtaining it without causing greater inconvenience than this Budget will create by the imposition of this temporary tax; and, without in the least denying the objectionable character of this tax in several particulars, Her Majesty's Government feel that they had no other choice before them but to make the proposal or to forego the expenditure required by the necessities of the country.

Bill read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT (1855) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 50.)

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

INDECENT ADVERTISEMENTS BILL. (No. 77.)

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

NAVAL DEFENCE BILL. (No. 80.)

PALATINE COURT OF DURHAM BILL. (No. 71.)

House in Committee (according to order); Bills reported without Amendment; and to be read 3ª on Friday next.

NATIONAL DEBT BILL. (No. 79.)

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

ASSIZES RELIEF BILL. (No. 96.)

ARBITRATION BILL. (No. 97.)

Reported from the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c., with Amendments: The Report thereof received; and Bills re-committed to a Committee of the whole House on Friday next; and to be printed as amended.

Standing Committees for General Bills and for Bills relating to Law, &c.

Ordered, That the Standing Committees have leave to print and circulate the Bills as amended by them.

House adjourned at Six o'clock, to Friday next, a Quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 28th May, 1889.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

BARRY DOCK AND RAILWAYS BILL.

[*Lords.*] (*By order.*)

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Herbert Gardner.*)

Sir J. PULESTON (Devonport): I regret that I feel myself compelled to occupy the time of the House in moving the rejection of this Bill. I believe that there is no opposition to the measure except to Clauses 13 to 18, which relate to the pilotage. If these clauses are struck out no objection whatever will be made to the progress of the Bill. I hold a statement in my hand which has been issued by the promoters of the Bill, and it suggests that the immediate necessity for the measure has arisen out of the refusal of the Cardiff Pilotage Board to fix pilotage rates. In a second statement, which has since been issued, the promoters frankly owu that other and very important points are raised by the Bill, and that the opposition is only directed to an incidental part of the measure. In that case we are entirely ready to meet the Barry Company on the question of rates if they will leave the matter to the Board of Trade, or to be settled by business men in a business way under the supervision or by the Board of Trade direct. A specious argument, however, is raised that the Bill ought to go in the usual way for the consideration of a Committee upstairs. [An hon. Member: Hear, hear.] My hon. Friend says "Hear, hear," but I venture to say that if the proposals contained in all Bills brought in by private companies, were to be inquired into by this House, the time of the House of Commons would be principally occupied in matters in which they ought not to concern themselves. As I have said we are prepared to meet the promoters' contention, that the sole reason for the introduction of the Bill is the alleged refusal of the Cardiff Pilotage Board to reconsider their determination as to the fixing of pilotage rates by leaving the matter to the proper authorities or the Board of Trade. The Barry Company appear to have been anxious to avoid any discussion upon the question of rates. and a gentleman who is largely interested in promoting the Bill has told me that he is thankful he shall not to be required to give evidence in favour of the measure upstairs. This, I think, shows that the real desire and object of the directors of this great important and wealthy company is not so much to advance the public interests as the pecuniary interests of the company. Now, I maintain that the House of Commons ought not to be asked to decide questions affecting the direct interests of corporations, where the public interests are not concerned. It is urged that both parties will receive fair play at the hands of a Committee. I grant that, but what does it mean to the pilots? It will undoubtedly entail a very heavy tax upon the pilotage fund, which means the savings of the pilots themselves, to have to fight this Bill in a Committee of the House of Commons. It will be said that the Bill has already passed the House of Lords. No doubt that is so, but it only passed, I am told, by the casting vote of the Chairman. Then, again, I must remind the House that there is a Bill before the House founded on the report of the Pilotage Committee of last year, and one of the strong recommendations of the Committee was that the system of employing choice pilots being a real grievance should be got rid of. In the face of that recommendation, this Bill is based on the principle of preference, and it is sought to establish a new Pilotage Authority involving all the objectionable features of choice pilots. The Pilotage Committee also reported that they attached great importance to the Pilotage Superannuation Fund being maintained on a solid basis, as affording security for the continuation of the best class of men in the service. Yet that is another part of the report which the promoters of this Bill seek to set aside. The passing of the Bill will very seriously interfere with the Superannuation Fund. The expenses will remain the same, but the income of the pilots will be destroyed by at least one-third. It is said that the pilots earn good wages. The average in earnings per man in 1887 is put

down by the Barry people at £396, but out of that sum £130 went to maintain efficient craft, and there was the interest of £25,000, the amount invested in 33 boats, to pay in addition to other expenses. It is said that the Barry Company have no pecuniary interest in the pilotage clauses. If that is so, it will be easy for them to come to the arrangement I suggest, namely, that the matter should be submitted to the Board of Trade. There is no precedent whatever for the creation of two Pilotage Authorities within the same port. At present the docks have not been opened, and therefore there is no existing grievance; the proposals of the Bill are opposed to all the arrangements made in the Bill of 1884, and the Bill of 1885. The pilots supported the Bill of 1885 on the distinct understanding that the pilotage of Cardiff as then settled was not to be interfered with. We have it in evidence before the Committee last year that the pilotage of the port as now constituted works smoothly and satisfactorily for all interests, and there was not one word from the Barry Dock Company to imply that it is working otherwise than satisfactory. The report of the Pilotage Committee was unanimous on the points mentioned, and I think that its recommendations ought to be adhered to. It is said that the constitution of the Pilotage Board of Cardiff is one-sided and antagonistic to the interests of Barry Docks. Now, I have no interest in this question, either directly or indirectly, and my sole object is to represent the interests of the pilots; and what I object to is that they should be converted into a kind of battledore and shuttlecock for the convenience of two opposing authorities. The representation of the port at this moment includes six representatives of the Bute Docks, seven of the Barry Docks, and five who are neutral. Surely that is not so much a one-sided Pilotage Board as the promoters of the Bill would lead us to think. The Barry pilotage ground only covers five miles, whereas that of Cardiff covers 60 miles. Yet the Barry Board want to have the pilotage under their own exclusive control, and I trust that hon. Members if they desire to act fairly, will hesitate before they interfere with the arrangements which now exist. I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Sir John Puleston.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

COLONEL HILL (Bristol, S.): I happen to have a very intimate knowledge of the waters of the Bristol Channel, and also of the present Act which governs the Cardiff Pilotage Board. I may add that I was the moving spirit which caused an application to be made to Parliament for the improvement of what I considered at the time to be a very improperly constituted Board, seeing that neither the shipowners nor the pilots were represented upon it. We met with much opposition from the Docks, from Lord Bute, and from the Corporation of Cardiff, but in the end we obtained the inclusion upon the Board of three shipowners and two pilots. The arrangement has been perfectly satisfactory to all parties ever since, and I have heard that the Bill which was then passed held up as an example of what a Pilotage Bill should be. The Barry Docks are some seven or eight miles from Cardiff and they do not possess a sheltered roadstead like Cardiff, and in certain prevailing winds from the South-west they are much exposed. This is important because a pilot in order to ensure the safety of a vessel under his charge from Lundy Island must know the waters not only up to Barry but into the Penarth Roads. The pilotage waters of Barry are therefore precisely identical to those of Cardiff. The Barry Docks are, as a matter of fact, situated within the limits of the Port of Cardiff. The Barry Docks are not yet opened, and should it be found hereafter that the present arrangements are inadequate an application may be made to Parliament for further powers. But the House is now asked to supersede the Cardiff Board altogether and, contrary to all precedent, to establish a second Board within the limits of the same port. At the present moment there are 120 pilots at Cardiff with 80 apprentices ready to

fill any vacancies that may occur. They are a most respectable class of men, earning moderate incomes. There is no new trade going to be developed by the Barry Dock Company, but the Docks are to be devoted to the shipping of coal which will be taken away from Cardiff. As, therefore, no accession of ships is likely to take place—if the Boards license pilots for the same service—it is easy to see that the pilotage will be reduced, but in what proportion I cannot venture to say. I believe I have fairly stated the facts, and upon these facts I invite the House to reject the Bill, principally on the ground that the existence of two Pilotage Boards in the same waters must lead to inconvenience and even danger; and that it will tend to the deterioration of the pilot service, because it is most important for the security of life and property that the best men should be attracted into the service. I am told that the Barry promoters are not satisfied with the proposed rates, but that is hardly a question I need enter into, because it is a matter which the Pilotage Board can regulate. Upon that Board there are already six shipowners, three appointed by Cardiff and three by Barry, and they will naturally be not anxious to pay more money than is necessary for securing an efficient pilot service. I am quite aware that it is unusual to refuse a Second Reading to a Private Bill, and that the House is generally disposed to send a Bill of this nature to a Committee for investigation. But I submit that I have shown clear reasons why the Second Reading in this case should be refused. Perhaps the House may be induced to consider, in addition, the enormous expense to which these poor pilots will be put in fighting, in a Select Committee upstairs, the wealthy promoters of the Bill. Nor must it be forgotten that a Select Committee has already considered the whole question of pilotage, and that it is at least premature to sanction a measure of this kind until effect has been given to the recommendations of the Pilotage Committee.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): I have plenty of sympathy for pilots, but I am of opinion that there are other interests besides those of pilots concerned in the passing of this measure.

Colonel Hill

*SIR J. PULESTON: There are no other interests whatever. I know of none.

MR. STOREY: Some of my hon. Friends are taking notes as if they were interested in Barry and the Barry Docks.

*SIR J. PULESTON: So they are.

MR. STOREY: I take it that my hon. Friend opposite has only at heart the interests of the pilots?

*SIR J. PULESTON: Quite right.

MR. STOREY: Now I have nothing to do with the Bristol Channel, nor am I one of the persons connected with the Barry Docks. I come from the far North, but it is because in the far North that we have precisely the same state of circumstances that exists in the Bristol Channel, and that we have suffered in Sunderland in consequence, that I intend to support the Second Reading of the Bill. In Sunderland we are part of the port of Newcastle, although we are 10 miles from the mouth of the Tyne, and we were under the control of Newcastle for pilotage purposes. Sunderland protested and demanded their own Pilotage Board and they got it, as I hope the Barry people will. It has been urged that if the Barry Company get this Bill through the pilot interest will suffer, for it is urged that any reduction in the pilotage rates caused by the competition must be at the expense of the pilots, who will be the sufferers. Is that true? What are the circumstances of the case? Here is Cardiff in the Bristol Channel, and here are the New Barry Docks 10 miles further down the Channel. Ships going to Barry escape the dangerous navigation between the Barry Docks and Cardiff. What the present arrangement has ended in is that pilots are permitted to charge for carrying ships into the Barry Docks, 10 miles further down the Channel, the same rates which they charge for carrying ships into the Cardiff Docks.

*SIR J. PULESTON: An offer has been made to accommodate them.

MR. STOREY: Surely, if a pilot carries a ship a distance less by 10 miles, and escapes a slow and tedious and dangerous navigation, it is only fair that he should receive a less rate of payment.

*SIR J. PULESTON: Hear, hear.

MR. STOREY: If my hon. Friend agrees to that, why does he oppose the

Bill on the Second Reading? The immemorial practice of the House in the case of private Bills, as well as public Bills, if there is no objection to the principle of the Bill, or, in the case of private Bills, if the Board of Trade do not report against them, has been to send such Bills to a Committee. My hon. Friend says he does not object to send this Bill to a Committee if the promoters consent to drop certain clauses, but those clauses are the essence of the Bill. I trust the House will not assent to the Amendment.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I was unable to be present when my hon. Friend (Sir J. Puleston) commenced his observations, but, having listened to the latter portion of his speech, and also to the speech of my hon. colleague (Col. Hill) in the representation of Bristol, I confess that I do not exactly understand the precise ground of the pilots' opposition to the Bill. At any rate, the question whether the Bill should be read a second time or not appears to me to have no bearing whatever upon the merits of the General Pilotage Bill, which I have already obtained the permission of the House to introduce. Moreover, I cannot see why, if this Measure should become law in its present shape, the interests of pilots, in whose behalf my hon. Friends are very properly so anxious, should be injuriously affected. The Board of Trade proposed in the Report they made on the Bill certain Amendments dealing with the position of pilots who might be licensed under it by the proposed Pilotage Board. Those Amendments have been inserted in the Bill by a Committee in another place. Therefore, the Board of Trade's views have been met by what has been done. If anything further is desired, unquestionably the proper place to discuss and investigate it is the Committee upstairs. Therefore, I feel altogether unable to support the proposal of my hon. Friends.

*SIR E. J. REED (Cardiff): I am sorry to say that my constituents are very much divided on this question, because the promoters and the owners of the Barry Docks are amongst the wealthiest and most important people in the district, and the pilots are men who have no such influence, but who deserve every consideration from us. I am unable to approve of the Amendment, and the ground of my disapproval is that it is premature to ask the House to stop the Second Reading of the Bill and so prevent it from going before a Committee of the House. That would be a very strong measure, and it is one to which no doubt a substantial majority of the House at all times objects. But at the same time there is a great deal to be said on behalf of the Amendment from the point of view of the pilots. My hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) has referred to the case of the Tyne and Sunderland as a parallel to this. I would remind my hon. Friend and the House that it is nothing of the kind. Sunderland was an old and well established town with corporate bodies and institutions well capable of protecting all the interests that might be involved in the question of pilotage, but at Barry there is no town, or if there is a town it mainly consists of buildings erected for the accommodation of the men engaged on the construction of the docks. The Bill for the Barry Docks was obtained on the distinct understanding that it was not to interfere with Cardiff as a port. The pilotage was dealt with and settled in a subsequent measure; and now before the Docks are opened, and because the parties are dissatisfied with the rates the Cardiff Pilotage Board have fixed, a Bill has been brought in and backed up by all the power and wealth of the Barry Dock Company, for the purpose of putting the pilots at a very great disadvantage indeed. After all I would advise my hon. Friends to let the Bill go without a division to a Committee upstairs, and then if the decision of the Committee should be found to be such as to justify further opposition in the House, let them move for the recommittal of the Bill, with a view to the point of pilotage being further considered. Personally I feel that a division in the House would rather prejudice the case of the pilots than otherwise. I hope they may rely with confidence upon the Committee upstairs doing full justice to all parties.

*SIR J. PULESTON: I will not press the Amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Main question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

QUESTIONS.

BOUNTIES—PORTUGUESE WINE.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been directed to the announcement that the Portuguese Government has introduced a measure for granting a heavy bounty on the export of Portuguese wine; and whether Her Majesty's Government have received any communications in regard to this great extension of the bounty system, either from the Governments of our wine-growing Colonies, or from the Governments of France, Spain, Italy, and other foreign wine-producing countries?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): It is understood that a change will be made in the provisions of the Bill in question now before the Portuguese Cortes, by which the clauses relative to bounties will be dropped, and the abolition of the Export Duty on wine be substituted for them. With regard to the last paragraph, I am informed that the Colonies have made no representations to Her Majesty's Government on the subject.

CEYLON CIVIL SERVICE PENSIONS.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is a fact that Officers of the Ceylon Civil Service who entered the Service before 1873 draw their rupee pensions at the rate of 2s. to the rupee, that Officers who entered the Service between 1873 and 1880 draw them at the rate of 1s. 10½d. to the rupee, and that the Officers who entered the Service at a date later than 1880 draw them at the rate of exchange current at the time of entering the Service; and, if so, whether he can state the grounds on which these concessions were granted, and whether any complaints on the subject have been received from any Ceylon taxpayers?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, Toxteth): Officers who entered the Ceylon Civil Service before 1872 are entitled to draw their pensions in England at 2s. the rupee, except those who in 1878 were granted an increase in their salary of 20 per cent, and these draw them at 1s. 10½d. the rupee. All officers who have entered since 1st of January, 1872, will be entitled to draw their pensions at 1s. 10½d. the rupee, which was the rate then fixed for payment in this country of half-salary of officers on leave and pensions of retired officers. My hon. Friend is mistaken in thinking that there has been any alteration in this rate since 1872. The rates I have mentioned were fixed more or less in accordance with the then ruling sterling value of the rupee; and as far as the Secretary of State is aware, no complaint on the subject has been made by the taxpayers of Ceylon.

INDIAN TELEGRAPH SERVICE—MR. GORDON.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether Mr. C. B. P. Gordon, of the Indian Telegraph Service, now retired, formerly drew his furlough allowances at the rate of 2s. to the rupee; and, if so, whether he can state the grounds on which this concession was granted; and, whether Mr. Gordon, and other retired officers in the same position, now draw their pensions at par; and, if not, whether he can state the grounds on which different treatment is accorded to these officers in regard to that part of their contract which deals with pensions, from that which was accorded to them in regard to furlough allowances?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): Mr. Gordon drew his furlough allowances at the rate of 2s. to the rupee, because in his covenant dated 1857 it was provided that "in all payments to be made under these presents the pound sterling shall be considered equal to and calculated after the rate of 10 rupees." Mr. Gordon and other retired officers in the same position do not draw their pensions at 2s. to the rupee, because at the time when their covenants were made those officers were not permitted to receive pensions in England, and therefore the covenant did not apply to pensions.

When permission was subsequently given for the payment of the pensions in England, it was granted on the express condition that it should only be paid at the varying rate of exchange.

INDIA—SPECIAL SCALE OF PENSIONS OF CERTAIN LEGAL UNCOVENANTED OFFICERS.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State if he can explain what "special scale in sterling was sanctioned" for the pensions of certain legal uncovenanted officers; at what rate to the rupee; what were the grounds on which this concession was granted; whether the "special scale" still remains in force; and what officers have been admitted to its benefits?

*SIR J. GORST: The "scale" is £300 per annum invalid pension after six and three-quarter years, £500 per annum after eight and two-third years, £750 retiring pension after eleven and a-half years. The pensions are granted in sterling. Officials requiring professional qualifications who are recruited from the legal profession at an advanced age, are in most Departments of the Government granted special terms on grounds which are generally well understood. The "scale" is now in force. Four officers have been admitted to its benefits—three Judges and one Secretary in the Legislative Department of the Government of India.

VOLUNTEER OFFICERS.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Invernessshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what steps are taken by General Officers commanding districts to ascertain the fitness of officers commanding Volunteers, and for recommending their retention as officers commanding when over the age of 60; and whether he will agree to a return of the names of all officers over 60 so recommended within the last five years in Scotland, together with the special reports in favour of such officers?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): As an officer commanding a Volunteer corps is only retained beyond the age of 60 on the recommendation of the General commanding his district, and as the latter is responsible for his recommendation, I must assume that he satisfies himself of the efficiency of the commanding officer. The special reports made on such occasions are confidential documents, and I cannnt consent to their production, or to a return of the names of officers recommended.

THE SLAVE TRADE.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can state approximately the number of slavers captured by English vessels since the commencement of the joint blockade; and whether the small number of captures is due to the fact that slave dhows do not run, or to the fact that as nearly all of them fly the flag of another Foreign Power, they are not interfered with, however numerous?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Admiral Fremantle reported in March that only one slave dhow had been captured by Her Majesty's ships since the commencement of the blockade. A more recent report states that in March over 1,300 dhows had been searched, but no captures made. There is every reason to believe that this is owing to the cessation of slave running, in consequence of the closeness of the blockade. No Foreign Powers having refused to recognise the blockade or the exercise of search in the Sultan's territorial waters, a foreign flag would be no protection to slave runners in these waters.

THE *PRINCE ALBERT*.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what amount of expenditure has been sanctioned upon the *Prince Albert*, and for what purpose; and what is the age, thickness of armour, and speed of that vessel?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The sum of £6,436 has been sanctioned for putting the hull, machiney, and equipment of the *Prince Albert* in a state to fit her for home service. She was completed in February, 1866. Her thickest armeur is 4½in. on her sides and 10in. on her turrets, and her measured mile speed is 11¼ knots.

IRELAND—COUNTY COURT JUDGE FITZGERALD.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Solicitor

General for Ireland whether it is a fact that at a Land Court held in Mullingar on the 25th ultimo, Mr. County Court Judge Fitzgerald, on hearing evidence in the first case on behalf of a body of tenant from an experienced land valuer, Mr. William Flynn, of Kilbeggan, as to the value of the farm (about which the witness was being examined), and the rent and tenant ought in fairness be called on to pay, the Judge ordered the witness to leave the box; whether the Judge is correctly reported to have stated that Mr. Flynn's valuation was "ridiculous because of its being so much under the Government valuation;" whether the landlord produced any evidence as to the value of the farm; and whether the Court valuer made any valuation of the farm, and if not, by what means did the Judge arrive at its value and fix its rent?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): The Government would not be justified in calling upon Judge Fitzgerald for any Report or for any statement of the grounds of his action.

PROCEEDINGS UNDER THE CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE ACT.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland, whether he will state the number of persons proceeded against in Ireland since September, 1887, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act of that year and under the ordinary law, for publishing newspaper reports and articles and selling newspapers.

MR. MADDEN: There were no persons proceeded against in Ireland, either under the Act referred to in the question, or under the ordinary law, merely for publishing newspaper reports and articles, or for selling newspapers. The number of persons proceeded against for such action under circumstances amounting to a breach of the law was—under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 16; under other branches of the law, two.

MR. CLANCY: The hon. and learned Gentleman has made a most amazing statement—namely, that no person in Ireland has been prosecuted for publishing newspaper reports.

MR. MADDEN: What I said was that no person was proceeded against merely for publishing newspaper reports.

MR. CLANCY: Then what was Mr. Sullivan, the late Lord Mayor of Dublin, sent to gaol for?

No answer was returned.

THE DRAPERS' ESTATE IN DERRY.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the following communication, sent to the Agent of the Drapers' Estate, County Derry, by Irish Land Commission:—

"Sir,—The Irish Land Commissioners have caused the 54 holdings on what is known as the Brackaghslievegallion division of this estate, and which are comprised in the agreements in the Schedule herewith named to be inspected. These agreements appear to have been executed within the following dates:—Six in October and 25 in December, 1888; 20 in January and three in March, 1889. It appears that in the vast majority of these cases judicial rents have been fixed by the County Court Judge prior to the execution of the agreements, and that the original rents were in such cases inserted in the agreements as being the rents payable by the tenants, and that all information as to the existence of orders fixing the judicial rents was withheld from the Commissioners. It further appears that at the date of or subsequent to the signing of these agreements receipts were given by the solicitors of the Company to many of the tenants for arrears of rent due prior to the 1st November, 1885, and for costs and receipts for two years' interest to 1st November, 1888, on defined sums of money, described in the receipts as 'the purchase money,' and apparently calculated at eighteen times the original rent. The total sums of unpaid cash named in these receipts, when added to the purchase money mentioned in the receipts so given for interest, appear to amount to the price named in the agreements for sale."

Is it the intention of the Government to lay the facts before the Attorney General, with a view to seeing whether a prosecution can be directed against the guilty parties; have the Land Commission been obliged to decline to sanction these transactions, and to declare that the tenants are in an impoverished condition; and will Papers on the subject be laid before Parliament?

MR. MADDEN: Inquiries are being made on the subject. I must ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone his question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Thursday.

THE SUGAR INDUSTRY.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether the Report on the

Sugar Industry will be in the hands of Members before the Whitsuntide holidays.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes, Sir, I have every reason to expect that it it will be.

THE SUGAR CONFERENCE.

SIR L. PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) (In the absence of Sir W. HARCOURT): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether any agreement has been made at the Sugar Conference requiring certificates of origin, or any similar method of verification, in the case of sugar exported by countries not parties to the Convention, and which do not produce sugar or give bounties?

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: I assume that the Sugar Conference alluded to in the question is intended to mean the Sugar Bounties Convention now sitting. The Report has not been sent in to Her Majesty's Government, but it is understood that it will include proposals in respect to certificates of origin, for the consideration of the several Governments represented; but until it has been received it is not possible to make any statement.

SIR L. PLAYFAIR (in the absence of Sir W. HARCOURT): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the record of the proceedings at the Conferences of the Sugar Convention, which have been held since the signature of the Convention, will be presented to Parliament?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The proceedings of the Commissien on Sugar Bounties now sitting relate chiefly to Drafts of Laws which have been prepared in different countries with the view to give effect to the Convention of August 30, 1888. The Representatives of those countries object to the publication of these Drafts of Laws, or of discussions in respect of them, until these Bills have been presented to the Legislature of the country whose sanction to the various Bills is asked. The right hon. Gentleman is aware that international usage supports the objection so taken. It is, therefore, not possible to say at what date the proceedings of the International Commission will be presented to Parliament; but it is hardly probable that these Papers can be given during the present Session.

DIFFERENTIAL DUTIES.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Secretary of State has received a communication from the Chamber of Commerce of Trinidad, with reference to the 30 per cent differential Duty imposed by Venezuela in 1882 upon British goods, in violation of the Treaty of 1825; whether it is a fact that the Duty in question has largely destroyed the trade of Trinidad with Venezuela showing a falling off of nearly 70 per cent in three years; and whether, as seven years have elapsed since the imposition of the Duty, Her Majesty's Government can now hold out any prospect of re- lief at an early date to the British merchants engaged in that trade?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The Secretary of State has received from the Governor of Trinidad a copy of a letter addressed to the Governor by the Chamber of Commerce on the subject of the 30 per cent additional duty levied in Venezuela on goods imported from British Colonies. The export trade from Trinidad to Venezuela has fallen off since the imposition of this duty. The exports in 1887 were less than in 1884 by nearly 70 per cent. In reply to the last paragraph of the question, as diplomatic negotiations have not been resumed, I am unable to add anything to the answer given to a similar question on the 6th of August last by my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

THE ALLEGED DESERTER THOMPSON.

MR. BALLANTINE (Coventry): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the Captain of H.M.S. *Duke of Wellington*, held an inquiry, on the 18th May, into the case of a man named Thompson, who had suffered 90 days' arrest, upon the allegation that he was a deserter, named Floyd, from H.M.S. *Calliope;* whether he is aware that the solicitor for Thompson on that occasion demonstrated to the Captain of the *Duke of Wellington* that Thompson was two and a-half inches shorter than the deserter, and five years younger, and that the period between his alleged desertion and arrest in England being only 20 days, rendered it impossible for

him to have deserted from the *Calliope;* what Report, if any, did the Captain of the *Duke of Wellington* make to the Admiralty of the said inquiry, and whether there is any objection to such Report being laid upon the Table of the House; and whether, if Thompson be still under arrest, he will direct that he shall be immediately released?

*Lord G. HAMILTON: The Captain of the *Duke of Wellington* held an inquiry into the case referred to in the question and satisfied himself that Thompson was not the deserter from the *Calliope* named Floyd. On the result of the inquiry being reported the Admiralty directed, on May 24, that Thompson should be sent to his regiment. So far as the Admiralty are concerned Thompson has been already released. It is not usual to lay these Reports before Parliament, and I do not propose to depart from ordinary practice in the present case.

Mr. BALLANTINE: Does the noble Lord contemplate compensating this man?

*Lord G. HAMILTON: I will look into the facts; they are rather remarkable. The man in question very much resembled the deserter, and the account which he gave increased the suspicion that he was the deserter. Therefore, before I give an answer to that question I should like to look a little further into the circumstances.

Mr. BALLANTINE: May I ask the noble Lord to make inquiries as to whether the man when arrested did not ask the captain of the ship to refer to his parents?

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I should like to know whether it is true that at the Court Martial Thompson denied that he deserted, that he was told to hold his tongue, and that on protesting his innocence he was put in a dark cell and fed on bread and water?

*Lord G. HAMILTON: If hon. Gentlemen want minute information on questions of this kind they should give a somewhat longer notice. Of course I will inquire into the facts.

DOURO WINE TRADE—TREATY WITH PORTUGAL OF 1842.

Mr. SEAGER HUNT (Marylebone, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the words "Douro Wine Trade," in Article XV. of the Treaty of 1842 between Great Britain and Portugal, apply solely to the produce of the district then under the jurisdiction of the Oporto Wine Company, the demarcation of which was defined many years previously by the Portuguese Government; and, whether the contract of the 15th March last, entered into between the Portuguese Government and a trading Company of wine growers and others, concedes an area for commercial purposes largely in excess of the particular district mentioned in the Treaty, and places British subjects on a different footing to the Portuguese, thereby constituting violations of the terms of the Treaty?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: There is nothing in the Treaty of 1842 to show that the words "Douro Wine Trade" applied to the Oporto Wine Company, which is not mentioned therein. We have not yet received a copy of the Contract of March 15th, but it has been asked for, and when received will be carefully examined. These questions will require some examination of documents which have been laid by, and also special inquiry, and I regret that I cannot at such short notice give my hon. Friend a satisfactory answer.

IRELAND—PROCEEDINGS AGAINST A REPORTER.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin, N.) (in the absence of Mr. Picton): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received information as to the circumstances under which Mr. John O'Mahony, a reporter on the staff of the *Cork Daily Herald*, has been summoned before a Magistrate's Court in Youghal; whether it is true, as reported, that Colonel Caddell signed a summons form, in which important parts were left blank to be filled in by the police; whether the charge against Mr. O'Mahony is that of "unlawfully and maliciously injuring one Charles William Talbot Ponsonby, by ploughing up, injuring, and damaging certain lands and corn crops, &c." on the 13th instant; whether it is a fact that the ploughing of the lands in question began at 6 a.m near Youghal, while Mr. O'Mahony only arrived at the Youghal Station from Cork by the 12 o'clock train, and drove thence to the estate; whether it is denied by any

one that Mr. O'Mahony came from Cork, and went on to the estate in discharge of his duty as reporter to the *Cork Daily Herald;* and, whether he will take steps to prevent any interference with the reporting of all the circumstances connected with evictions in Ireland?

MR. MADDEN: Local inquiries are necessary in this case. I must therefore ask that the question be postponed.

HALIFAX AND BERMUDAS CABLE CONTRACT.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow College): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the prospectus, published in yesterday's *Times*, of the Halifax and Bermudas Cable Company, Limited, inviting for this day (28th May) subscriptions for £120,000 debentures, and setting forth—

"That the Company has been incorporated for the purpose of carrying out a contract with Her Majesty's Government for laying a telegraphic cable between Halifax (Nova Scotia) and Bermudas;" "that the principal object for which the present issue of debentures is made is to provide the security required by Her Majesty's Government, and to complete a contract that has been entered into for the manufacture and laying of the cable;"

And that—

"As the right to the subsidy and to lay the cable depends on a fully paid-up subscription of £100,000, unless the debentures subscribed are sufficient to fulfil this condition the Directors will not proceed to allotment;"

whether the sanction of the Treasury, as required by Article 11 of the Halifax and Bermudas Cable Contract, approved by this House on the 10th instant, has been given to the transfer of the benefits of the contract from the International Cable Company to the new Company; whether, as provided in Clause 14 of that contract, the International Cable Company, with seven days of the approval of the contract by this House (namely, by the 17th of May), proved to the satisfaction of the Treasury that the £100,000 required "had been subscribed and fully paid up;" if not, whether, under Clause 19, the contract has not "absolutely ceased and determined;" and, if the contract is still in force, if he would explain the nature of the transactions that are taking place in regard to it?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): (1) A conditional sanction to the transfer has been given. The terms of the sanction are that the Halifax and Bermuda Company is to satisfy the conditions of Clause 14 of the contract, and that that company or the International Cable Company are to satisfy the condition of Clause 15 of the contract; (2) the Treasury have modified Clause 14 in respect of the period within which it is to be proved that the capital has been subscribed and paid up, and have informed the company they will accept such proof within one month from the date of the approval of the contract by the House of Commons (May 9). This is the period within which the deposit of £15,000 is to be made under Clause 15. Under these circumstances the contract remains operative, one of its terms having been varied by agreement between the parties to it. As regards the power to assign, the Treasury has followed precedent, as Article 14 of the agreement with the Eastern Telegraph Company and the Brazilian Telgraph Company for the West African Cable in 1885 runs as follows—

"The companies shall not assign, lease, or cede the benefit of this agreement and the subsidy and concession therein involved, or any part thereof, so long as any subsidy shall be payable hereunder without the previous consent of Her Majesty's Treasury, which may be signified in writing under the hand of the official director; but nevertheless Her Majesty's Treasury will consent to an assignment (in such form as shall be approved by them) of this agreement or of the said subsidy to a new company established in England whose constitution and subscribed capital shall, in their opinion, be such as will secure the due fulfilment of the obligations of the companies under this agreement, which are to be assigned to or adopted by the said new company."

DR. CAMERON: My point is this—as the contract sanctioned by this House has not been fulfilled in an essential particular, and the contract therefore lapses, does the hon. Gentleman propose to submit a new contract to the House for ratification?

MR. JACKSON: I am advised that the contract does not lapse. The Treasury have complete power to vary the agreement.

DR. CAMERON: Then am I to understand that the submission of a contract to the House is a mere farce?

MR. JACKSON: No; if the contract were to be varied in any essential par-

ticular—either as to the amount of the subsidy or the period of years over which the contract is to run—that would certainly be contrary to the sanction given by the House, but I believe it is clearly understood that the Treasury have the power to vary this agreement in minor particulars.

DR. CAMERON: Then, if I remain a Member of the House during the 20 years the contract has to run, I shall on every contract on which the subsidy comes up oppose it as being granted under a contract which was never sanctioned by the House.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen): May I ask the Secretary to the Treasury on what day the Treasury agreed to vary the 14th Article of the contract?

MR. JACKSON: I am not able to answer that question. If the hon. Gentleman will give notice of it I shall be very glad to answer it. Of course that has been done by the legal officers of the Treasury; it was not done by me.

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, E.): Are we to understand that the Treasury hold the view that if a Postal or Telegraphic contract for a series of years has been approved by this House, it is in the power of the Treasury to vary the terms of the contract, because, if so, that is a new doctrine and ought to be justified very clearly.

MR. JACKSON: I am advised that it is quite within the competence of the Treasury to alter the period of time within which proof to the satisfaction of the Treasury should be given, or, in other words, taking this clause as it stands, that it is within the power of the Treasury to vary the period within which proof should be given to the Treasury from one month from the signing of the agreement to within one month from the approval of the House of Commons.

DR. CAMERON: As a matter of fact, does not Article 14 of the contract provide that unless £100,000 shall be subscribed within one month of the agreement by the Treasury, or within seven days of its ratification by this House, whichever shall first happen, the contract shall absolutely cease and determine, and was not the clause embodied in the contract which the House ratified?

MR. JACKSON: Yes, Sir, no doubt it was embodied in the contract, but I am advised it is within the competence of the Treasury to take such action as it has taken. I may also say that before taking the action, the Treasury were satisfied by proof which had been submitted to them that the condition would be complied with, and could be complied with within the period specified.

*MR. CHILDERS: Will the Secretary to the Treasury lay a Treasury Minute on the Table, stating the facts and giving the reason why the Treasury consider they can vary such a contract?

MR. JACKSON: Yes, Sir, I do not think there is any objection to that.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I should like to ask the hon. Gentleman whether he has been advised that under the arrangement by which all contracts made by the Treasury shall be submitted to and approved by the House, it is in the competence of the Treasury to alter a contract by one hair's breadth, and whether the contract submitted to and approved by the House is not the only contract by which Parliament is bound?

MR. JACKSON: I think I have already answered the question very fully and almost in the precise words the right hon. Gentleman has used.

IRELAND—THE ASHBOURNE ACT—ULSTER ESTATES OF LONDON COMPANIES.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the recommendation of the Royal Commission on London Guilds, contained in the Report of that body in 1884, that the companies referred to

"should be placed by Act of Parliament under such restrictions as regards the alienation of their real and personal estate as would remove all danger of the loss of any portion of their property,"

and that a Commission should be appointed by such Act of Parliament to undertake

"the allocation of a portion of the corporate incomes of the companies to objects of acknowledged public utility, and the better application of the trust incomes of the companies;"

and whether, in view of the fact that three of the London Companies owning estates in Ulster have recently obtained under the Ashbourne Act nearly half a million of money for those estates, the

Government will propose any legislation in furtherance of the recommendation of the Royal Commission, with the object of securing for Ulster or for any other part of Ireland a portion of the funds which have been obtained in the manner described?

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have not had time to refer to the Report of the Commission of 1884, but my recollection of it is that it had no reference to the particular point which the hon. Gentleman has raised. In the quotation which the hon. Gentleman gave of it, it was stated that the companies

"should be placed by Act of Parliament under such restrictions as regards the alienation of the real and personal estate as would remove all danger of the loss of any portion of the property."

That of course does not refer to the provisions of the Ashbourne Act, which merely deals with alteration in the investments of the companies, but to another matter—namely, the articulation of the funds of the companies which belong to them as public trustees. Nor does the other quotation bear on the particular question. The Commissioners recommend the appointment of a Committee to undertake

"the allocation of a portion of the corporate incomes of the corportion to objects of acknowledged public utility."

No doubt that lays down a very sound doctrine, but it by no means provides that the companies ought to spend part of their income on objects "in Ulster or any part of Ireland." I imagine that whatever obligations the companies are under in the matter must arise, not upon the Report of the Commission of 1884, but upon the interpretation which must be put on the original charters which granted them the estates.

MR. CLANCY: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that, in his opinion, it does not mean that the money derived from these Irish Estates should be spent in Ireland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No. What I said was that any argument with regard to the mode in which the funds of this company should be allocated for certain purposes in Ulster must be adduced from the original charter which granted the lands to the companies, and not from the Report of the Commission.

MR. CLANCY: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, in order to direct attention to the real matter of this case, whether he is aware that recently one of these companies refused absolutely a single penny to endow a technical school and granted only £300 for a school in Belfast, while at the same time they devoted no less than £12,000 to a College in Great Britain?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, South): Is it not a fact that these companies got these estates on certain conditions—one of the conditions being that they were to maintain education and religion on these estates; and does the right hon. Gentleman approve of these companies selling their estates and taking the money out of Ireland into England and neglecting the fundamental principle upon which these estates were given?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should be sorry to give, without notice, an opinion on that point, which my hon. Friend will see, though relevant to the question, does not directly arise from it. His argument is based upon the terms of the original charter and not upon the recommendations of the Commission with regard to this matter.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to state that on the first opportunity, and on every opportunity afterwards, I will draw attention to the systematic attempt of these companies to divert what are undoubtedly Irish funds, to the uses of a country that has plenty of capital of its own.

RESIDENT MAGISTRATES AND JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland did Mr. Caddell, R.M., proceed from Cork to Youghal, to try Philip O'Dean under the ordinary Law, a distance of 30 miles; did Mr. John Byrne, J.P., proceed from Mallow to Fermoy, to try some policemen under the ordinary Law, a distance of 15 miles; was Mr. Byrne deprived of the Commission of the Peace for so proceeding, on the ground that he acted outside his Petty Sessions district, although his commission gave him jurisdiction throughout the entire county of Cork; and why are the Resident Magistrates allowed to do what involves dis-

missal from the Commission of the Peace in the case of ordinary Justices?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As already stated in reply to a former question, Colonel Caddell was in temporary charge of Youghal district. Assuming that the gentleman referred to is Mr. Byrne, of Wallscourt Castle, it would appear that he was superseded in the Commission of the Peace for persisting in attending at Petty Sessions outside his usual and appointed district for the purpose of adjudicating on certain cases or a certain class of cases. Justices of the Peace are appointed for certain Petty Sessions, which they elect to attend. Resident Magistrates are not restricted to particular Petty Sessions, but are held available for duty wherever their services may be necessary.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman tell the House why it is that while Justices of the Peace are confined to a particular district the Resident Magistrates can act not only over the entire county, but sometimes, apparently, in several counties?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Resident Magistrates are paid out of the public funds for exercising those very functions.

MR. HEALY: Are those Resident Magistrates who have been made District Commissioners confined to a particular Petty Sessional district?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: They exercise no judicial functions whatever. They never preside over a Court of Law.

MR. HEALY: But my point is, are they confined in the exercise of magisterial functions to the Petty Sessional district?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I should imagine not.

MR. HEALY: Then will the right hon. Gentleman explain why there are two kinds of Justices of the Peace—those who are confined to particular districts and the Divisional Commissioners?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Without going into the general question, I may point out that this gentleman, Mr. Byrne, was dismissed for exercising out of the Petty Sessions district for which he was appointed, not ordinary magisterial functions, but judicial functions. The Divisional Commissioners never exercise judicial functions at all.

PROPOSED IRISH LAND BILL.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, South): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the particulars of the proposed Irish Land Bill of the Government, published in the London Correspondence of the *Belfast Northern Whig*, of the 22rd instant; whether it is his intention, as therein stated, to transfer the fixing of fair rents from the Land Commission to the County Court Judges and lay assessors, with the right of appeal to the next going Judge of Assize for each county; whether he proposes, as therein indicated, praactically to abolish the Land Commission and to transfer the investigation of titles under the Ashbourne Act to the Land Judges' Division under Judge Munroe.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My attention has been called to the newspaper paragraph referred to. It was an unauthorized publication, and does not accurately represent the intentions of the Government. It is not proposed to introduce a Bill unless the state of public business renders it probable that it can be passed into law.

THE *SULTAN*.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I wish to put a question to the First Lord of the Admiralty, of which I have given him private notice. He was understood to say yesterday that to-morrow an inquiry would be held into the circumstances attending the attempt to save the *Sultan*. I wish to ask the noble Lord what will be the nature of the inquiry, and particularly whether it will be in the nature of a Court Martial?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: It will not be a Court Martial. The inquiry will be under the usual forms and procedure adopted at Courts of Inquiry directed to be held by the Admiralty to investigate questions or matters relating to the naval service.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: I wish to ask the noble Lord whether it is intended to hold a Court Martial upon the officer who was in charge of the *Sultan* at the time, for the losing of the ship?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: A Court Martial has been held upon the officer in command of the ship for

stranding his ship, but at that time it was uncertain whether she would be lost or not. If evidence had been then forthcoming, he would have been tried on a second count of losing his vessel. It was in my opinion inexpedient to try that officer a second time, after the ship was lost, upon a second charge of losing his vessel, and for that reason I directed a Court of Inquiry to go into the whole matter attending the loss of the *Sultan*.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: Who was the officer in charge, and will the Court Martial be held upon him? Is there any precedent for an officer who loses a ship not being Court Martialled for it?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The only officer who, according to the Queen's Regulations, can be charged is the officer in command of the vessel. There is no such precedent as the hon. Member suggests, but this is a very unusual case, and it was for that reason I directed this Court of Inquiry to be held.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: I must repeat my question on the point of fact. Who was the officer in charge of the *Sultan* at the time she was lost?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The only officer who can be tried for the loss of the vessel is the officer in command of the vessel, and that officer is Captain Rice.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: Was Captain Rice the officer in command of the vessel at the time she was lost?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Yes, Sir, he was.

THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will take the Second Reading of any further Scotch Bills for Whitsuntide?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I must really ask the House to make progress with business as opportunity occurs. Until the two Local Government Bills have been dealt with, I am not able to make any announcement with regard to Scottish business.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I think it was understood that if the Government got the Vote on account, without discussion, there would be a prolongation of the holidays.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am very sorry if I have to disappoint any hon. Member. What I said about the course of business was that if the Scotch Local Government Bill passed a Second Reading last night, as was expected, I should be able to make a statement as to the business to be taken on Thursday. The House, however, was not disposed to pass the Second Reading last night, and therefore it stands for Thursday, and so another day will be occupied. I am therefore not in a position to make any statement as to the course of business. The hon. Gentleman is mistaken in thinking I promised any prolongation of the holidays if the Vote on account passed without discussion. I stated that if Class 2 of the Civil Service Estimates was completed I should be very glad then to meet the wishes of the House by a more extended time. There are, however, still so many Votes to be taken that it would be highly improper on the part of the Government to extend the time of the recess.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

VOTE ON ACCOUNT.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a further sum, not exceeding £3,455,500, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st of March, 1890, viz.:—

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS II.

England:—	£
Privy Council Office and Subordinate Departments	7,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	7,000
Mercantile Marine Fund, Grant in Aid	20,000
Secret Service	6,000
Scotland:—	
Secretary for Scotland	1,500
Exchequer and other Offices ..	1,000
Fishery Board	1,000
Lunacy Commission	500
Registrar General's Office	500
Board of Supervision	1,000

Ireland:—	
Lord Lieutenant's Household ..	2,000
Chief Secretary's Office	7,000
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	300
Local Government Board	5,000
Public Works Office	5,000
Record Office	700
Registrar General's Office	2,500
Valuation and Boundary Survey ..	5,500

Class III.

England:—	
Law Charges	12,000
Criminal Prosecutions	10,000
Supreme Court of Judicature ..	65,000
Railway and Canal Commission ..	1,000
Wreck Commission	2,000
County Courts	20,000
Land Registry	400
Revising Barristers, England ..	—
Police Courts (London and Sheerness)	3,000
Police, England and Wales ..	—
Prisons, England and the Colonies ..	75,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	80,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	5,000
Scotland:—	
Lord Advocate, and Criminal Proceedings	10,000
Courts of Law and Justice ..	10,000
Register House Departments ..	6,000
Crofters Commission	2,000
Police, Counties and Burghs (Scotland)	5,000
Prisons, Scotland	20,000
Ireland:—	
Law Chargesand Criminal Prosecutions	15,000
Supreme Court of Judicature ..	16,000
Court of Bankruptcy	1,500
Admiralty Court Registry	200
Registry of Deeds	3,000
Registry of Judgments	400
Land Commission	20,000
County Court Officers, &c. ..	18,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police (including Police Courts)	20,000
Constabulary	250,000
Prisons, Ireland	20,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	25,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	1,000

Class IV.

England:—	
Public Education	800,000
Science and Art Department ..	80,000
British Museum	25,000
National Gallery	2,000
National Portrait Gallery	400
Learned Societies, &c.	5,000
London University	3,000
Universities and Colleges, Grants in Aid	7,000
Scotland:—	
Public Education	140,000
Universities, &c.	2,000
National Gallery	—
Ireland:—	
Public Education	200,000
Teachers' Pension Office	100
Endowed Schools Commissioners ..	100
National Gallery	500
Queen's Colleges	2,500
Royal Irish Academy	900

Class V.

Diplomatic Services	70,000
Consular Services	50,000
Slave Trade Services	5,000
Suez Canal (British Directors) ..	—
Colonies, Grants in Aid	6,000
South Africa and St. Helena ..	16,000
Subsidies to Telegraph Companies ..	14,000
Cyprus, Grant in Aid	44,000

Class VI.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances	100,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, &c.	7,000
Pauper Lunatics, Scotland	25,000
Pauper Lunatics, Ireland	40,000
Hospitals and Infirmaries, Ireland ..	6,000
Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiency	50,000
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain ..	800
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Ireland	200

Class VII.

Temporary Commissions	3,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	—
Total for Civil Services	£2,495,500

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.	£
Customs	100,000
Inland Revenue	100,000
Post Office	600,000
Post Office Packet Service	160,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£960,000
Grand Total..	£3,455,500

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow College): I am sorry to interpose, but does not this Vote on Account embrace sums required for the Post Office which may become due, and will payment on account of the Submarine Cable Contract, about which I asked a question to-day, be included? I have indicated my objection to the contract, and I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to promise that nothing of this sum shall be applied to this cable subsidy, but that we shall have an opportunity of discussing it before any promise is made.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No portion of this Vote will be devoted to

payments on account of the Cable Contract referred to by the hon. Member. The Post Office Telegraphs Vote is passed, and if any payment were to be made it would be out of that Vote. The hon. Member has received an assurance that a Treasury Minute shall be laid on the Table stating the circumstances in relation to a variation on the terms of the contract, and if necessity arises the hon. Member will have an opportunity of raising the question and taking the opinion of the House before any payment is made.

DR. CAMERON: Upon the Treasury Minute?

Mr. W. H. SMITH assented.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow.

Committee to sit again to-morrow.

SUPPLY [2ND MAY].

Resolution reported.

CLASS II.

"That a sum, not exceeding £60,366, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

Resolution read a second time.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I rise to move the reduction of this Vote by £100 part of the salary of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. I do so for the purpose of taking the judgment of the House upon the line of conduct the Government has thought fit to pursue towards the French Government and the French people on the occasion of the opening of the great Paris Exhibition. The consideration of this Vote has stood over for a considerable time, but I for one am not disposed to regret the delay, because, for one thing, it has enabled us to realize the immense importance and signification of this enterprise dedicated, as it is, to the exhibition of the results of peaceful industry throughout the civilized world, and also to realize how completely the interest and sympathy of the country have gone out towards France in this great undertaking. Indeed, there has been but one discordant note, and that has been struck by Her Majesty's Government, and on this I wish to speak, and to this I desire to direct the attention of the House for a few minutes. This subject has been before the House on two previous occasions, when I have felt it my duty to protest against the action of the Government in this matter, or their refusal to appoint a Commissioner in the usual way to take part in the promotion of the Exhibition. The conduct of the Government in so refusing may be said to have been whitewashed by the Vote that was taken, for, of course, the Government obtained a majority, so that in so far as they abstained from officially appointing a Commissioner to take part in the promotion of the Exhibition I shall consider the question foreclosed, and I do not intend to reopen it. I only allude to it for the purpose of saying that the foreclosing applies as well to the plea put forward by the Government on that question. They sheltered themselves under the wings of Lord Rosebery, and claimed that in abstaining from an official part in the proceedings for the promotion of the undertaking they were only following out the policy of their predecessors. I have not attempted to justify it before, and I say again the action of the Liberal Government three years ago was not entirely to be commended. When a most courteous and kindly invitation was sent by the Government of France to this country, Lord Rosebery, instead of accepting it as he ought to have done, without hesitation or demur, directed our Ambassador at Paris to inquire if there was any political meaning in the celebration. It was a most ungracious and unfortunate policy—ungracious considering the character of the invitation to which it was a response, and doubly unfortunate because it has given too much colour to the plea made by the Government now and on a former occasion that they have only been carrying out the policy of their predecessors. But I will consider all that ancient history. We had all that over two years ago, and a year ago, and just as I do not propose to go into the question of the original abstention so I hold the Government are precluded from going back upon their ancient plea. What we complain of now is that this year the Government

ordered their Ambassador to leave Paris on the opening of the Exhibition at the same time when similar orders were given by the monarchical Governments of Europe to their Ambassadors. To this I call attention, and to this the former contention of the Government has no relation whatever. I can state the facts in a few words. To begin with, the French Government on this occasion made a marked and special official distinction between the centennial celebration which was of a political character, and the mere opening of the Exhibition itself, which was of an entirely civil and non-political character. They fixed the centennial political celebration for Sunday the 3rd of May, and the opening of the Exhibition for the 6th of May, separating the two ceremonies widely and distinctly. Now, we can understand that Her Majesty's Government felt bound by their former decision to abstain from taking part in the first of these celebrations, but there is no such decision alleged for abstaining from the second, the official opening of the French Exhibition itself. But what did the Government do? On the Saturday before the 6th of May, the day appointed for the opening of the Industrial Exhibition, Lord Lytton, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, left for this country, as I venture to allege, under orders from his Government at home. If that was not so then a denial must come from the right hon. Gentleman who represents the Foreign Office in this House. At the same moment the Ambassador for Germany left Paris and went home, the Italian Ambassador went home to his country, and so on through the whole list of Continental Monarchies, including even the miserable little Monarchy of Belgium. I believe they all retired at the same moment. Now what I allege is that this means an understanding and co-operation between all these Governments to take their Ambassadors out of Paris so that they might be absent when the Exhibition opened. I know that the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary has declared that there was no concert between the British Government and the other Governments in the matter. I do not know whether he is going to repeat that assertion in the House to-day, but I ask the House not to take diplomatic denials like that, but to judge from the facts as I have stated them. I will ask the House to apply to the Government exactly the same measuree of justice the Government insists on applying to Members of this House. I ask the House to imagine for a moment an International tribunal, something like that set up in Ireland, and I would ask if there was brought before such a tribunal a charge that the British Government had conspired with other Governments to boycott the French Exhibition, and supposing it was adduced in evidence that at the same moment the Ambassadors of the different Governments left Paris when the Exhibition was about to open, would not such a tribunal accept that as proof of conspiracy? Is it not a common sense view of the matter, that the withdrawal of all the Ambassadors at the same time was not a mere coincidence, but that it was an intention to put a slight on the people of France, if not on the Government of France, on the occasion of the opening of the Exhibition? I admit that the French Government is not in a position to make any official complaint, but I do allege that French feeling was deeply wounded on the occasion. ["No, no!"] If the Government deny that, I appeal to the columns of the *Standard*—their principal organ in the press—whose Paris correspondent repeatedly appealed to the Government to allow these Ambassadors to attend. The facts prove a cowardly shrinking on the part of Her Majesty's Government from association even with Republican institutions, and an absurd attempt to boycott the French Revolution. I say it with deliberation, an absurd attempt to boycott the French Revolution, and they wholly misinterpreted the feelings of the English people on the occasion. I have a further question to put. I think it is established conclusively in evidence that should satisfy all reasonable demand for proof, that there was a conspiracy and that Her Majesty's Government were parties to it. How far did this boycotting go? How far have the Government used the resources in their power to inflict what I call this slight upon the French Government and people? It has not been confined to this matter, there was a trifling occasion last week when the same spirit manifested itself. The Minister of the United States celebrated the occasion by a ban-

quet, but no British representative was present, and the Ambassadors of the other Powers were absent also, only the representatives of Republican Governments were present on the occasion. The Austrian Ambassador excused himself on the ground that he could not forget Marie Antoinette, what ground the Ambassador of England had to urge I do not know, but I merely mention that as showing corroboration on a trifling occasion and forming part of the evidence against the Government. And now I am going to allege something more serious and showing a feeling on the part of the Government that I should have declared incredible unless I knew it to be supported by considerable evidence. I am sorry I do not see the Under Secretary for India in his place, for this is a matter which concerns his Department. What I am going to give to the House is an instance of how the Government used their power in India to carry out this same policy of slighting the feelings and casting indignity on a friendly people on the other side of the Channel. The most interesting Department of the French Exhibition, I believe, or one of the most interesting at all events, is the Anthropological Section, and a very large and important contribution to that Section was made under the auspices of the Government of Bengal. This is a valuable collection of a series of life-size models of types of the various races to be found in Bengal. It was prepared by Mr. Risley, whom also the Bengal Government appointed as their Commissioner at the Paris Exhibition, allowing him also £500 for his official expenses in that connection. But what happened? I am speaking from information derived from India and from high authority. Lord Cross, the Minister for India, sent a despatch to the Government of Bengal, in which he ordered them to cancel both these appointments, to disallow the official position of Mr. Risley and disallow his expenses, adding, "I need not mention the reasons for which I write this despatch." I think that is hardly credible. It is hardly to be supposed that the miserable spirit which showed itself originally in the boycotting of the Exhibition and the churlish refusal to take part in the opening ceremonial should have been carried so many thousand miles away to a distant dominion of the Queen, and that the exceptional powers of the Government in India should be used in furtherance of the same party and mean-spirited policy. These are the facts I have on reliable authority. I ask the Government to deny or explain them. I believe the defence of the Government on a former occasion was that they could not take part in anything of a political character; they thought it their duty to remain neutral, and that it would be embarrassing to side with one party in the celebration; but I venture to say that, in doing what they have done, on ordering their Ambassabor out of Paris they have taken a side more emphatically than they would have done if they had fulfilled the ordinary courtesies of the situation and had accepted the courteous invitation extended to them. Again I refer to another supporter of the Government—the *Times*, which is nothing if not a supporter of the Government. The *Times* said that there were no people in France except the French Convervatives who did not further and support the Exhibition, and that these people carried their opposition so far as to insult, with a total want of good taste and good sense, the President of the Republic, for whose formal removal they openly combined. By their line of action the Government have committed themselves to a partnership, not with the Government of that country, but with rebels and pretenders with whom that Government is fighting. There is one matter that makes this line of conduct peculiarly unfortunate. I venture to allude to it with all reserve. I mean the presence in this country at the moment Her Majesty's Government were so acting of the leader of fanatical and unprincipled opposition to the French Government. That person, seeking in this country the shelter which Parliamentary Institutions alone enable us to give him, is doing his best under that shelter to overthrow Parliamentary Institution in France. Having among us avowed enemies of the Parliamentary *régime* in France, Her Majesty's Government ought to have been extremely careful not to wound the susceptibilities of the French people. But, I believe the real motives of Her Majesty's Government are not avowable in this House. The most unfortunate aspect of their conduct is that it has

engendered suspicions of this country which I regret to see arise. They are accused of subserviency to a great foreign Minister, but I am not going to repeat the accusation because I have no facts to support it. It is unfortunate, however, that colour should have been given to such a suspicion, because we have had recent instances how far the noble Lord the Foreign Secretary and that Minister are prepared to go together in dubious undertakings, or what will be dubious undertakings for this country. It is unfortunate that the conduct of the Government should give colour to suspicions of subserviency which are simply not mentionable in this House. I for one am not going to break through any constitutional rule by accusing the Government of being guided by the dictation of the Court. That may or may not be, it is a matter of absolute indifference to us, but it is extremely unfortunate that the Government should have given colour to the suspicion out of doors that this has been the fact. Now, I venture to ask the whole of the Liberal Party to join in condemning the conduct of Her Majesty's Government, who have tried to behave as if they are Ministers, not of Parliamentary Government, but of a mere Monarchy, which I deny that they are. I say, setting here as representatives and servants of this House, they have no right to act out of doors as if they are anything else, or as if in either their foreign or domestic policy they owed allegiance to any other quarter than the majority in this House. If they get the majority of the House to acquit them, well and good, then they have satisfied their masters; but I think those masters are easily satisfied if they are willing to whitewash the Government for action dictated by influences that ought not to guide their action at all. The whole action of the Government amounts to this, they have wantonly insulted the national feelings of a friendly people, and in so doing have been guilty of a gross blunder against international comity. Their whole behaviour from first to last has been an infamous perversion of their trust as Ministers of a democratic country, and a gross falsification and misrepresentation of the feelings of the people of this country whose Ministers they are.

Mr. E. Robertson

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£60,366" in order to insert "£60,266."—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N. E.): The hon. and learned Gentleman has propounded, and I might almost say laboured, a somewhat heavy indictment against Her Majesty's Government; but though he said he had proved—and I suppose he did prove to his own satisfaction—a conspiracy into which Her Majesty's Government entered to insult the French people and so forth, I venture to think that the House must have rather missed the grounds and body of his proof. I confess I have heard from him nothing I can answer in the way of proof of conspiracy, nothing but assertions of his own and certain insinuations which he said he would not formulate. I think it is well not to insinuate that which you dare not formulate. Certainly it is conduct the reverse of courageous to attempt to insinuate that as to what you bring no proof.

*MR. E. ROBERTSON: I beg pardon; I did not do so.

*SIR JAMES FERGUSON: I am in the recollection of the House. The hon. Gentleman did not accuse the Government of acting under certain dictation, home or foreign, but he founded in his peroration some strong epithets, and some rather laboured denunciations on these allegations, as if they were distinctly stated and proved. Certainly I am not here to shelter the Government under the acts of their predecessors. The action of the Government stands on its own foundation, perfectly intelligible and defensible. It is true, as has been stated on former occasions, that it has been continuous with the action of their predecessors. But Lord Rosebery and the Government of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian are not responsible for the act of Her Majesty's present advisers; and I do not for a moment seek to say that it was on account of the very natural and proper inquiries made by Lord Rosebery in 1886 that Her Majesty's Government abstained from taking part in the promotion of the Exhibition. The main feature of the hon. and learned Member's accusation was the absence of Her Majesty's

Ambassador from Paris on the occasion of the opening of the Exhibition. The hon. and learned Member assumes—that is another of his assumptions—that Lord Lytton's absence occurred in consequence of a concert between Her Majesty's Government and the Governments of other countries. I told the hon. Member on a former occasion that Lord Lytton was not ordered to withdraw in concert with other Ambassadors, or that our action had been taken in concert with other Governments. But I will state to the House how and why it was Lord Lytton was absent. On the 2nd of May, Lord Lytton informed the Secretary of State, by a private letter, that he must ask for leave of absence in order to consult his medical advisers in England on account of a serious malady with which he was afflicted. On the 4th of May leave of absence was given him. He has since that time, as is well known, been invalided from an ailment of some gravity, which may confine him to the house for a further period. Thus the leave was applied for and granted at a certain date on the unfortunately too genuine ground of medical treatment. But I should also mention that previous to his applying for leave of absence on a specified day, the Secretary of State had privately communicated to him that if—as appeared probable—most of the Ambassadors would be absent from the opening of the Exhibition, it would be difficult for the English Ambassador to take part in a matter of internal political controversy, and therefore that it would be desirable that he should not be present. The fact of the Exhibition having a peculiar significance was not the idea of Her Majesty's Government, and was not communicated to them by any other Government. It was distinctly stated, in answer to the inquiries made in Paris in 1886, that this Exhibition had been fixed, not at the customary decennial period, but at a somewhat later date, in order that it might synchronize with the centenary of the French Revolution, which was called in the statement of the French Minister the Hegira of the French nation. I do not think that anybody now doubts that the Exhibition has a political significance. I ask the House whether this country ought to have any opinion with reference to the French Revolution which was commenced in 1789. It is a subject upon which parties in France up to this day are bitterly divided. [*Opposition cries of* "Oh!"] Do hon. Members say that there is no considerable section of the French people who do not rejoice in the French Revolution; as there were parties at the time to which it was a bitter shock? If that be not so, I cannot understand how there can be parties in France which are opposed to the present *régime*. We do not concern ourselves in the affairs of foreign countries. Let me point out to the House that when a nation is unanimous in rejoicing at the centenary or bi-centenary of an event with regard to which there exists no difference whatever in that country, there can be no impropriety in Her Majesty's Government joining in the universal satisfaction and taking part in the celebration. It was in this spirit that in 1874 the Government of Lord Beaconsfield authorized Her Majesty's Representative to take part in the Centenary Exhibition at Philadelphia to commemorate the Independence of the United States. That step was taken by a Conservative Government. In that case there is now no party in the United States which entertains different opinions. But I would say that for Her Majesty's Government to take an official part on an occasion which was declared to be a celebration of an event with regard to which all parties in the foreign country are not united would be analogous to the Ambassadors of foreign countries taking part in a celebration here, say, for or against the Union of England and Ireland. But the hon. and learned gentleman has ventured to say that Her Majesty's Government are acting in imitation of rebels and pretenders against the Government of a friendly State in withholding their official participation in a political celebration. That is an assertion which hardly requires a reply, it is so monstrous, so scandalous. We are doing nothing against the established Government of France in withholding ourselves from direct participation in this Exhibition. I would remind the House that these assertions of unfriendliness between the two Governments have not been made by the French Government or the French people. They are the sole and

pure invention of the hon. and learned Gentleman and some others who take a similar view. In the invitations given by the French Government to Her Majesty's Government, as shown in the papers laid before the House, they distinctly anticipated the declinature of Her Majesty's Government. But a hope is expressed that in the event of our declining Her Majesty's Government would give facilities for the passage of English goods and so forth. This was readily and cordially accorded, and neither in the correspondence nor at any time since has there been any weakening of the cordial relations between the two countries on account of the conduct of Her Majesty's Government. The hon. and learned Member actually finds some ground for his accusation in the refusal of the Secretary of State for India to sanction a certain expenditure on the part of the Government of India for the contribution of certain objects to the Exhibition and the expenses of an officer to accompany them. I should have thought it followed that if Her Majesty's Government did not take part in the Exhibition neither would the Government of India do so. The hon. and learned Member calls this a miserable evasion, and says that it is a selfish spirit which refuses so trifling a sum. That the Government of India should not take an official part follows from Her Majesty's Government not taking an official part, in spite of the enormous epithets employed by the hon. and learned Member. The course of the Government has been perfectly consistent and perfectly friendly. There has been no coolness whatever in the relations between the two countries. Our officers and French officers in every part of the world conduct themselves to each other with friendship and a careful avoidance of offence. On the East Coast of Africa, where lately there have been delicate relations and events which might have led to trouble, there has been no collision or inconvenience whatever, because of the good understanding maintained and the mutual consideration displayed. It remains for gentlemen in this House to attempt to raise a suspicion and an idea of offence having been given to the French Government by Her Majesty's Government. That allegation is entirely without foundation, and will recoil upon those who make it.

MR. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I do not know whether this debate is to be a Party debate, but for my own part I feel that I stand in a very disadvantageous position with regard to the Motion of my hon. and learned Friend, who commenced his speech by a general indictment against the conduct of a Liberal Government. For that conduct I am responsible. My first duty, therefore, is to defend myself in the most explicit manner against my hon. Friend. I entirely differ from him. I hold that if we had taken the course which he recommends we should have departed from all the traditions of business and from all the rules of common sense. The state of the case is this. The substance has already been stated by my hon. Friend behind me, who was Under Secretary of State at the time. On the 12th of February, 1886, a verbal inquiry was addressed by the French Ambassador to Lord Rosebery, who was then Secretary of State, as to what course Her Majesty's Government would pursue with reference to the coming Exhibition. The inquiry was, as far as I know, simply lodged with my noble Friend, who thought it his duty to make some inquiry with respect to the exact object of the Exhibition, whereas my hon. and learned Friend thinks he ought at once to have said, without consulting his Colleagues, that the Government would take part in the Exhibition. I must say I think, with respect to the case of the French Revolution, that it is extremely difficult to speak of that great event, which commenced in 1789 and was supposed to have terminated in 1793, as if it were an integral and homogeneous transaction of which you must pronounce the same opinion with reference to its opening and its close. Considering that it closed in a war between France and this country, it would have been indecent on the part of this country to take part in the celebration of the events which immediately brought about that war. Lord Rosebery did no more than the rules and traditions of business and the rules of common sense required in putting, not in an antagonistic or hostile manner, and not directly putting a question to the Ambassador, but asking Lord Lyons to ascertain and inform him what it was exactly which it was proposed to celebrate. Lord

Rosebery was proceeding on the principle which appears to me to have been the right principle—namely, that if we are to look at the close of the French Revolution and the terrible events of its later stages, whatever we may think of the close of those events, and the persons really responsible for them, we must regard these later events with different feelings from those with which we regard the earlier stages of that great movement. Therefore I think Lord Rosebery did no more than his duty in making that inquiry, and that he would have done less than his duty if he had done otherwise. I will not say any more on that subject—though I rather think it has not been sufficiently observed, that as far as Lord Rosebery was concerned the matter remained entirely in an initial stage. Before Lord Rosebery obtained an answer from Lord Lyons—which answer was given by the method of transmitting documents which conveyed full information on the points Lord Rosebery had mooted—the French Ambassador again called on Lord Rosebery and informed him that the French Government did not wish at that time to press for an answer. That is the point so far as the late Government is concerned. Nothing can be more fair than the statement of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, in regard to the relations between the proceedings of the late Government and the proceedings of the present Government. No doubt the proceedings are continuous, as they all have reference to one single transaction. They did not one depend upon another, and I shall freely give my opinion as to the course which has been taken by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the absence of Lord Lytton from the ceremonial of the opening of the Exhibition. I am not quite certain whether I accurately understood the answer given by Lord Salisbury in 1887, when he replied to the formal and official inquiry of the French Government by stating that it was "not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take an official part in the International Exhibition which is to be held at Paris in 1889." I apprehend that those words contained no opinion at all, and no intention at all upon the question of the attendance of Lord Lytton at the opening of the Exhibition. What they meant, if I understand them rightly, was that her Majesty's Government did not intend to take a part in the sense of appointing Commissioners to take charge of the British section, and also of applying to the House of Commons for a Vote of money in order to meet the expenses. That I take to be the meaning of Lord Salisbury. Whether that was a wise and proper attitude to take up I do not undertake to say, but I am aware of no reason in the world to make that answer a subject of censure, and I beg to be understood as not at all concurring in that censure. It is a question perfectly open for each Government to decide whether they will or will not in such a manner take an official part in an exhibition to be held in a foreign country. I own, however, that I look with considerable regret to the course taken in respect to the attendance of Lord Lytton at the opening ceremonial of the Exhibition. I have been differently informed to my hon. Friend as to what actually occurred on that day. I understood him to say that on that day the representatives of the Republics attended—meaning, I presume, the representatives of the American Republic, and probably of the Swiss Republic—but that the representatives of Monarchies did not attend, even down to the "miserable Monarchy" of Belgium. I must say that I did not expect any Member of this House, and least of all a Liberal Member of the House, to describe Belgium as a miserable Monarchy. There is not in all Europe a Monarchy of more untainted honour, there is not a Government of more beneficial operation, there is not a spot on the map where constitutional principles have been more faithfully and more beneficially observed, from the time when that remarkable man Prince Leopold was chosen the first King of Belgium, down to the present moment, when the present King of Belgium has for so long been engaged in treading in the very steps marked out for him by his father, to the immense benefit of his country. If that be a miserable Monarchy, God help humankind where to look for your political operations and political institutions. I believe I am speaking the sentiment of the whole House when I say that that Monarchy has our sympathy and admiration, and should the necessity arise it would, I believe, on

all proper occasions have our support. So much with regard to the epithet which unfortunately slipped into the speech of my hon. and learned Friend. As regards the attendance, from what I have been informed—and my information comes on what may be considered good authority—the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman is not correct. It is not the fact, I believe, that the representatives of the secondary Monarchies in Europe—secondary not in point of character, but in point of extent and material force—did not attend. I believe that a portion did attend and a portion did not. I treat this as a mere question of sound or unsound judgment, and not of undue subserviency on the part of Her Majesty's Government, and still less of anything like concert or conspiracy. I entirely accept the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman. It was not an assurance necessary for me, for I take it for granted that the decision was made in good faith, and by no means with reference to any undue dependence on what might be done by others. I understand that the decision which was taken was this. The Government decided that in case the majority of the Ambassadors of the other Powers determined not to attend, our Ambassador should be prevented from attending at the opening ceremony.

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: What I said was that it was not thought desirable that he should be present in Paris at the time.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I quite agree that if our Ambassador was not to be present at the opening the matter would be made worse rather than better by his being in Paris, and I accept that as a consequence of his absence from the ceremony. But it does not appear to me, debating this as a question of sound or unsound judgment, that this was a case in which we ought to have looked to the example set by other Powers. I may not be able to understand in all cases the motives by which those Powers were actuated in keeping their Ambassadors away from the Exhibition, but I can sympathize with the Governments of Berlin and Vienna. There may have been for them some sort of difficulty in attending the celebration, as there would have been for us if the Exhibition had been intended to commemorate the execution of Louis XVI., because the Governments of Berlin and Vienna, most unfortunately for themselves, for France, and for mankind, set themselves against the Revolution from the beginning and began to intrigue against it, and finally formed a military combination before the date of the horrors had arrived. They formed a military combination to put down the expression of the free sense and judgment of the French people, which combination, I believe, was one of the main causes of the great excesses and atrocities by which some stages of the French Revolution were so deplorably marked. But, however unfortunate that combination might have been, and however guilty it is found when political history comes to be written, I quite see that it would have entangled and embarrassed those Governments of the present day had they been expected by an ostensible and a patent act to break with the traditions of their predecessors of a former date. So much for those Governments. With regard to the Italian Government, I have in my hand the report of the debate in the Italian Chamber on the 5th of May, in which Signor Crispi gave his account of the absence of the Italian Minister from the celebration. His words were express. He stated that he did not advise it, and was not responsible for it, but it was entirely the result of a prior application by the Italian Ambassador for leave of absence. I do not think that these examples were very applicable to the case of Her Government. Even if they had been, it was their duty under the circumstances to have exercised an independent judgment. To me it is as clear as day that that judgment has been exercised entirely in the wrong direction. This Exhibition was an International Exhibition, and should have had from us, I do not say official intervention—I leave that entirely to the discretion of the Government — but all respect and all sympathy. The right hon. Gentleman said it was an event referring to matters of internal controversy in France. I must say I heard that statement with surprise. The right hon. Gentleman said that the French were not all of one mind about the French Revolution, and that on that account it was no part of our business to pronounce an opinion upon it, and that it would have been wrong in us to join in the compli-

mentary act of attending the President on the day of the opening. In the first place, I maintain that in 1789 we did express opinions upon it, and that the opinion of England was favourable to it. As to Mr. Fox, what said he on the taking of the Bastile? He wrote to his friend Fitzpatrick:—"How much the greatest event it is that ever happened in the world, and how much the best!" It may be said that Fox did not speak the opinion of England. Not always; but on that occasion he did. It would have been very wrong for Mr. Pitt, the Minister of the day, to use that expression, but Mr. Pitt in 1789 spoke in the most friendly terms of what had gone on in France. It was on the 9th of February, 1790, I think, as it is recorded in the *Parliamentary History*, that he referred to the partial difficulties and differences which there were in France, and said that when these had passed away and the constitution of France should become restored, "it would be freedom rightly understood—freedom resulting from good order and good government." Now, Sir, I want to test this proposition of the right hon. Gentleman in a way which appears to me perfectly clear and distinct. He says that in 1874 the Government of Lord Beaconsfield ordered our participation in the centenary of the American Revolution, and that nobody could possibly object to it. Did nobody object to the American Revolution? The right hon. Gentleman's argument in this case is that there were certain Royalists in France or certain privileged persons or classes to whom the Revolution was, as he says, a great blow. Well, now, Sir, I would say this with respect to these Royalists and the *noblesse* of France, that they ran away from France in the hour of her difficulties. I would say that there were in America loyalists to the British Crown far more numerous and ten times more respectable than the privileged classes in France—men who had a very considerable amount of legal and constitutional argument to advance in favour of the course they wished to see taken. Why then, if we are so tender of the feelings of those gentlemen who objected to the French Revolution, to whom, even in its first stages, it was quite, I admit, a serious blow, we ought, I say, to have been ten times more tender to our brethren, of the same blood and language, who were loyalists in America and were entitled to a far greater share of our sympathy. Lord Beaconsfield, I agree with the right hon. Gentleman, acted with great wisdom and propriety, and was entirely right, in sanctioning our intervention in that centenary celebration. But if he was right in that, how much more requisite was it that we should not withhold the usual and ordinary and very moderate compliment to the Government of France to attend the President on the opening of this great Exhibition. Let me try it in this way. The right hon. Gentleman says it was a matter of internal controversy in France, and it is not our business to pronounce on those matters which are controverted among parties in other countries. I think, perhaps, the fairest way of trying the question is to suppose a converse case. Suppose it happened, as it might have happened, that in the year 1888 we might have had a great exhibition, and we might have been governed to a certain extent in the selection of that year by the fact that it would also be a commemoration of the Revolution of 1688. Suppose that we had such a exhibition, or that we had such a prospect, and that we had made a communication to the French Government and that it had said to us in reply, "We cannot allow our Ambassador to attend the great Exhibition in celebration of the Revolution of 1688, as that Revolution is a matter of controversy." Well, now, Sir, is that true? We are now united in thought, but I have known a gentleman holding high office in the Tory party in my time who detested the Revolution of 1688. I pass that by. At any rate there was a large portion of the country who at the time disproved of the Revolution. The dominant Church disapproved of it. They did resist James II. in his attempts to break the law, but they disapproved of the Revolution. We know how strong the party, the Jacobites, afterwards were for the King. We know what took place in the following period, when it became necessary on the part of Parliament to extend its own existence from three years to seven because they believed that if Parliament dissolved at that time a majority would

be returned in favour of James. I think there are three things to be considered. First of all, if the French did take such an objection, it would give just offence in this country. But the French would have been a great deal too rational and too historical to take such an objection. But I venture to say they would have had more ground for taking the objection, because the French had declared against our Revolution at the time, had given shelter to the fugitive and his family, not merely as a fugitive, but as a rival pretender, and they had given the support of their arms to his rival pretensions. I do not think there is any man in this House who, for a moment, believes that if in the case I have supposed, we had invited the French Government to take a share in the inauguration of a great exhibition in 1888, which had undoubtedly among its purposes the glorifying of the Revolution of 1688, the French Government would have dreamed of so fanciful, so puerile, so childish a step as to declare that the Revolution was a question of internal controversy in England, and that it was not for a foreign country to pronounce upon it. Now, Sir, with respect to the offence taken in France. I must say that I think this most unfortunate and unhappy act carries with it the antidote to its own bane. The proceeding was little better than ridiculous. It excited contempt, and that was why the French passed it by without resentment. I have no doubt many looked upon it with displeasure in France, but passed it by as a matter of insignificance. But there is another reason why the French made little or rather nothing of it, and that is the strong and solid sentiment of friendship with England which happily pervades the French people. Friendship of that kind is not to be broken down by an act of folly—an act of folly without intention and free from the taint of malice, but undoubtedly an error of judgment of a very gross kind. I feel confident no similar case will occur hereafter, that no such plea will be set up, and that no such act will take place. Lord Lytton is a man with whom I have had the misfortune to differ years ago upon matters of the most serious kind, but I will do him the justice of believing—I feel perfectly confident—that he never advised this step. I think his knowledge of the world and the atmosphere in which he lived were quite sufficient to save him from any error of that kind. I have given my opinion very frankly. I have admitted to the Government that we are ourselves, my hon. Friends behind me, placed into the dock along with them. I do not consider that we are entitled to take any benefit in a Party sense from this discussion. We acquit the Government of evil intention, and certainly of anything like conspiracy or concert. There has been committed an error of judgment which it is extremely desirable to bring to the bar of the opinion of this House, and, therefore, notwithstanding the little rubs he has given us in passing, I am thankful to the hon. Member behind me for having brought the matter into the light of free open discussion in our assembly of the House of Commons.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): Sir, I am glad to see from the concluding sentences of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that he had not forgotten the commencement of his remarks. During the latter part of his speech, where he spoke of the contempt with which the French people looked upon our conduct in this matter, I wondered to what extent he had forgotten that in the earlier portion of his speech he had indicated that his own Government might have taken a line which would probably have deserved the same contempt. ["No," from Mr. Gladstone.] Well, I think the right hon. Gentleman will admit that after the questions of Lord Rosebery, there might have been a fear that the French people would have felt that contempt for the late Government which the right hon. Gentleman fears may now be felt.

MR. GLADSTONE: It is not possible with the views we entertain. The whole object of Lord Rosebery's inquiry was to know what it was that was to be celebrated. If it were to celebrate the acts of January, 1793, no doubt we should have refused.

*MR. GOSCHEN: It was, then, a limited liability kind of calendar which was to be drawn up. The French Government were to be asked, "Up to what date is this celebration to go?

If you are content to start with the Bastile, well and good; we are with you; but if it goes up beyond a certain date it will be necessary to come to an understanding. We regret that in consequence of the extension of date the circumstances are such that we cannot accede——

MR. GLADSTONE: I may state in the clearest manner that we made no communication to the French Government at the time. We desired Lord Lyons to inform us, which he did by means of a public document.

*MR. GOSCHEN: I was only trying to follow out what appeared to be the train of thought of the right hon. Gentleman. The train of thought was this: "Let us get information as to what is going to be celebrated. If you are going to celebrate the initial step only, then we can attend; there will be nothing against our joining in the Exhibition. But if, on the other hand, you go further, and we are to be drawn into celebrating a stage of the revolution which does not find much sympathy in English opinion, then we will withdraw one participation." I want to know whether that abstention which would have subsequently taken place would not have looked very much like the abstention which has taken place under our auspices. It strikes me that abstention like that might very likely have been looked upon not with anger but with contempt by the French people. But I do not believe that the French people have looked on our abstention with contempt for a moment. I think they believe that it was a perfectly rational step—namely, non-interference in matters which to this day are the subject of political controversy. Let me point out how the right hon. Gentleman distorted the argument of the Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs. My right hon. Friend was answering an attack which had been made upon the Government, but in which the right hon. gentleman opposite certainly took no part whatever. We had been attacked as if it were from a Monarchical point of view we had refused. The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary made this reply—that this was not a celebration on which all classes in the country where the Exhibition was to take place were united, and that if it had been, then it would have been no question as between Monarchy and Republic, but we might have joined in the Exhibition without scruple. But the right hon. gentleman suggested that our objection was taken from a monarchical point of view, and that it was on that ground that we had refused to take part in the Exhibition. That was what ran through the whole argument of the right hon. Gentleman, and when he spoke of the Revolution of 1688 he seemed to think that because there were differences of opinion at one time as to that Revolution it would be a parallel case to the present if, on the celebration of that event, the French Government were to refuse to send their Ambassador here. But the point of the whole case—a point which my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary did not labour, because it is not desirable to labour these questions connected with the affairs of foreign countries—is this, that to the present day there are differences, and vast differences, of opinion in France itself in regard to those great events. Therefore abstention in this case is not as the hon. Member for Dundee suggested—taking part against one section or great party of the French people. It is doing that which, I think, the great body of the people of this country would wish us to do—namely, to abstain from expressing any opinion upon a subject upon which there are differences of opinion among the French people themselves. I submit that that constitutes the whole point of the case. It was not a question as between the Monarchy and the Republic, as suggested by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Dundee, who, I think, will hesitate before he again makes a rash incursion into the domain of diplomacy after the remarks of his chief. The hon. Gentleman, indeed, suggested every kind of reason why we had refused to join in the commemoration; but the right hon. Gentleman opposite was more just to us in explaining the situation more fully, and I desire on the part of the Government to acknowledge the great frankness and impartiality with which he touched upon this part of the case. He expressed his conviction that it was not from any arrangement with foreign Powers, or from any indirect or sinister motive, that the Government had acted, but

that if we have committed an error, which I do not for a moment admit, it was an error of judgment, and that we had acted independently in the matter. I thank the right hon. Gentleman for that accurate statement of the facts of the case. As to the motives of which the hon. Member for Dundee spoke, they are simply the creatures of his own imagination. And now let me point out to the House, how the right hon. Gentleman on another point has confirmed or at any rate come near confirming, our action. He says he is not disposed to condemn us for not having taken an official part in the arrangements of the Industrial Exhibition, but he condemns us for not having had our Ambassador present at the opening ceremony. It appears to me that that would have placed us in a far more compromising position than if we had taken part in the arrangements of the industrial department of the Exhibition. We should have stultified ourselves, if, having refused to take an official part in the Exhibition generally, our Ambassador had been present on an occasion upon which every French statesman would be fully entitled to use whatever language he chose with regard to events in the past history of his country. I think the right hon. Gentleman agrees that it would be better that we should not be in Paris at all than that being in Paris we should refuse the invitation to the opening ceremony. It is absolutely unnecessary on the part of the Government to give any assurances as to the absence of any intention to put a slight on the French people. Her Majesty's Government have been on cordial terms with the French Government ever since they came into office, and are on cordial terms with them now; and there is not a single man on this side of the House, who has not every whit as much sympathy with the French people, as well as the French Government, as any hon. Gentlemen opposite. It was scarcely worthy of the hon. Member for Dundee to attempt to make a case against Her Majesty's Government by looking for an insult where no insult was meant. or by endeavouring to conjure up all sorts of petty incidents intended to prove that which cannot be proved—namely, that in the action Her Majesty's Government had taken, they had been false to that friendship and sympathy with the French people, which it is their privilege to feel, and their anxiety to maintain.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I do not rise for the purpose of offering many remarks, but there are one or two observations which have fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer which call for reply. In his remarks upon my right hon. Friend's reference to the Revolution of 1688 he made a statement which will be received with surprise by anybody who has been Chief Secretary for Ireland on a 12th of July. If he thinks that those differences of opinion which existed in 1688 are not still an active force in English politics, he is very much mistaken, and the reference of my hon. Friend was absolutely in point. Then the right hon. Gentleman says that apparently the object of Lord Rosebery and his colleagues in making inquiries of the French Ambassador was to find some opportune date at which the French Revolution entered into a groove to which we could give our approval. But I am amazed to find that the right hon. Gentleman did not to seem to be aware that the Government of that day—the then Tory Government—thought so little of what had happened in France, that, as my right hon. Friend has stated, the British Ambassador was actually not withdrawn from Paris by Mr. Pitt until the autumn of 1792. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite are so discontented with the moderate Toryism of George III. and Mr. Pitt that they insist on refusing to take any part in the commemoration of the events which took place three years before the time when Pitt thought it necessary to withdraw our Ambassador. Those points are not worth dwelling upon, but when we are told that Her Majesty's Ministers object to compromise themselves or Her Majesty's Government by taking any part in the commemoration of the French Revolution because of the events of 1793-94, they might as well quarrel with the Reformation because of the 30 Years' War which followed it. My own contention is exactly that of my right hon. Friend, that all the noyades, fusillades, guillotinings, and carnage which took place were as a mere drop in

the ocean compared with the bloodshed and carnage of the 30 Years' War. But which of us here would say a word against the Reformation on that account? My own information is exactly that of my right hon. Friend, that all the carnage which followed after 1792 was entirely due to the coalition of despots. It was their conspiracy and invasion of France and their semi-avowed intention of partitioning France which produced all those horrors upon which right hon. Gentlemen are relying as a justification for their present action. I only want to point to one consideration raised by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, which makes us feel it our duty to go into the Lobby with my hon. and learned Friend behind me as a protest against the position the Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken up. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says the events of 1789 are a matter of bitter controversy in France to this day. I am not at all sure that that is so as a matter of fact. In our day the events of 1789 are probably accepted by all parties in France. I do not suppose that even the Legitimists themselve resent any of the events of 1789. The Comte de Chambord himself, when he had a chance of going back to his country and his throne in, I think it was, 1873, did not do so, because he insisted on sticking to the old Bourbon flag, and he was obliged to abandon his design because to throw over the tricolour and adopt the white flag would have been fatal to this project. The right hon. Gentleman implies that this is so much a matter of internal controversy in France that in fact the French Government is not the Government of the nation, but of a faction. ["No, no."] If the right hon. Gentleman's position does not amount to that, what does it amount to?

MR. GOSCHEN: I asserted that France was not united on the point; that there is a large body of Frenchmen to whom the French Revolution—I did not say 1789—does not convey that same sense of satisfaction which it does convey to the majority of the French people. I said there are still political controversies with regard to that event.

MR. J. MORLEY: Political controversies raised about the events of the French Revolution! But the question is, what is the Government of France? You are concerned with the Government of France, not with minor controversies nor particular factions in France. The great body of the French people have declared their adherence to the present form of Government. It has been the principle of all British Governments—and their consistent principle—not to pronounce any judgment upon even the transactions of to-day in France, much less to pronounce judgment on the transactions of 100 years ago. We have uniformly recognized whatever form of Government the French people chose to adopt. We have recognized the legitimate and constitutional Monarchy, we have recognized the Republic, then we have recognized the Empire, and now we recognize the Republic again. We have uniformly said we have no concern with these controversies or these factions. It has been felt that we have no concern with these controversies or with these factions. Yes, but you now, by the position taken up by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, have taken a side. [Mr. GOSCHEN dissented.] Why, is it not to take a side to refuse to pay an ordinary ceremonial compliment to the head of the French Government? Is it not to take a side to refuse an invitation so cordially sent, and one which might so properly have been complied with? On that account, because the right hon. Gentleman opposite commits the Government of this country to an attitude which has never been taken by the British Government before, we shall vote with my hon. and learned Friend, and I for one, not in a Party sense and not for Party purposes, —there would be no great harm if it were in a Party sense—but it is not in a Party sense that I, for one, deplore that this opportunity has been lost of showing to the French nation that we wish well to their institutions, and that we recognize their full right to rejoice at the anniversary of the era of their emancipation and their admission to the rank of free countries.

SIR R. LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, North): The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone) commenced his speech by expressing a doubt as to whether this question was one which ought to be treated on Party lines, but

he was followed by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Morley) who has just sat down and who has attempted to deal with it on Party lines by endeavouring to fix on the Party on this side of the House a most odious imputatien, that any section of the Conservative Party is in any way inclined to regard in an unfriendly spirit our neighbours across the Channel, and the great French Republic. Sir, I heard with very great pleasure the explanation offered by the right hon. Gentleman, the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Sir J. Fergusson), and also by the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) as to the action taken by Her Majesty's Government in regard to this matter, and I must say that as a member of the Conservative Party I repudiate in the strongest terms. I can use the imputation made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Dundee (Mr. Robertson), and that has been more than insinuated by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Morley) that the Conservative Party is in any degree open to this reproach. Nor, I venture to say, would that imputation be for a moment believed by the Leaders of French public opinion. In saying this I speak from some personal knowledge, for I am myself connected by ties of near family relationship with subjects of that great Republic—themselves Republicans—and I assert in the most unqualified manner that among the enlightened masses of the French people it is absolutely absurd to suppose there is any resentment felt on account of the action taken by the Government of this country. I may also state that I am a member of several sections of the Committee of the Paris Exhibition. I am a member of the English Section, the Indian Section, and the Ceylon Section. I am acquainted with a considerable number of Frenchmen both in Paris and in the provinces, and I am in a position to say absolutely that there is not a scintilla of resentment harboured against this country in consequence of the action of Her Majesty's Government in reference to the Paris Exhibition. They have felt as every sensible man must feel, that the Government should avoid in every possible way, any approach to interference in contentious matters affecting our neighbours. The hon. Member for Dundee referred to a matter of which I can speak with personal knowledge, and that is the question of the proposed employment of my Friend, Mr. Risley, of the Bengal Civil Service, as a member of the Anthropological Section of the Paris Exhibition on behalf of the Indian Government. I say it would have been absurd for the Government of India to send one of its officers to take an official part in an Exhibition in which the parent Government here does not take an official part. It was proposed, I know, to allocate £500 out of the revenue derived from taxation out there to pay Mr. Risley's expenses at the Paris Exhibition on this errand. I have not seen Mr. Risley on the subject, but I think I can speak for him. I am very certain he accepts with perfect loyalty the decision of the Government that the proposed expenditure from Indian funds should not be sanctioned, and that he is quite ready to do just what I have done, namely, go to Paris at my own expense, to take part in the ceremonies, and thereby show the great regard and respect I have for France and the love I have for the French people. In conclusion I wish to ask hon. Gentlemen opposite to say who really are the friends of the French people, those who respect the susceptibilities of the French people, those who vote as I intend to vote, that is to say that our Government have no desire to inflict an insult upon the Government of France or the people of France, but are acting in perfect good faith, or, on the other hand hon. Gentlemen opposite who wish to fix upon us an attempt to insult the French people which we have never offered, and which we entirely repudiate? I think the French people will not thank the hon. Gentleman for the part he has taken in this discussion.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: I should like with the indulgence of the House to make a personal explanation. My right hon. Leader commented on a phrase in my speech with regard to Belgium. The word "miserable" did slip into my remarks; at the same time I utterly and

entirely disavow the meaning which the word assumed in the hands of my right hon. Leader. I beg to withdraw the word, and to say that I did not mean it in the sense imputed to me by my right hon. Leader.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): The right hon. Gentleman has ably defended Lord Rosebery, but it is not a question now as to the attitude of Lord Rosebery; the question at the present moment is whether the Government were right in withdrawing our Ambassador from Paris. The Under Secretary commenced by telling the House that Lord Lytton left Paris because he was sick, and the right hon. Baronet looked quite indignant when we rather hesitated about it. We know perfectly well all about sick Ambassadors. There was the famous case of Lord Whitworth, who was ordered to tell the First Napoleon after an interview in which some strong expressions were used that he was ill at the next reception. These political illnesses are purely political. But what would have happened under these circumstances? If it had simply been that Lord Lytton had obtained leave because he was ill, the Chargé d'Affaires would have gone to the Exhibition instead of Lord Lytton. The Under Secretary perceived that himself, and gave up the doctrine of illness. What did he tell us? He told us that a private letter was sent by Lord Salisbury to Lord Lytton, asking him to find out whether it was probable that most of the Ambassadors would be absent, and, if so, on his part to leave Paris.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I did not say "to find out," but that "as most of the Ambassadors would probably be absent."

MR. LABOUCHERE: In that case somebody told Lord Salisbury, so that there must have been concert in the matter. Complaint has been made of the subserviency of the Government; and the right hon. Gentleman himself has admitted the subserviency, because for Lord Salisbury to order the Ambassador to leave because others were leaving—what was subserviency if not that? We are told that the Exhibition is a matter of political significance—that it is the centenary year. What centenary? The right hon. Gentleman has attempted to show us that it is the centenary of the French Revolution. No, it is the centenary of the assembling of the States General, an important part of the constitution of France, who were called together by the Monarch. If the right hon. Gentleman knew anything of French history — which it certainly appears that he does not—he would know that. It is admitted by every Frenchman that the French Revolution did not begin with the calling together of the States General, but with the taking of the Bastile. The right hon. Gentleman tells the House that there were many in France who were opposed to the calling together of the States General. Were the Orleanists? The head of the Orleans family voted for the death of Louis XVI. Were the Bonapartists opposed to it? I challenge the right hon. Gentleman to say that anyone has ever got up in the French Chambers and stated that he was opposed to it. It is universally admitted, except by a few despicable people who still linger in the Faubourg St. Germain, that the French Revolution, notwithstanding its great and many crimes, has been beneficial to the French nation. This was to be a national Exhibition, and really the date amounts to nothing. I presume that the real reason for holding it was to consolidate and strengthen the Republic in France, and not because it happened to be the centenary of calling the States General. I am perfectly ready to admit that there were persons in France who are opposed to the French Republic, but not to the calling together of the States General. What I deprecate is that Her Majesty's Government should have consented to play into the hands of the enemies of France. This was a national Exhibition; the head of the French Government opened it, and it was really monstrous for the right hon. Gentleman, or rather for Lord Salisbury to confederate with those Governments who are not in alliance with France to withdraw our Ambassador. It is said there

is to be a silver wedding over here. I would say let no member of the Royal Family go to it. Let no Member on the other side go and dine with General Boulanger. Gentlemen in their love of every pretender will go and cringe and dine and celebrate silver or golden weddings of any member of a Royal Family; but when President Carnot invited the English Government to take part in an Exhibition which was certainly for the benefit of France and for the peace of the world, they refused.

*Baron F. de ROTHSCHILD (Bucks, Aylesbury): My only object in rising is to point out that hon. Members who have spoken in favour of the reduction of the Vote have somewhat misrepresented the case, because it has always been considered that the meeting of the States General was not the centenary of the French Revolution, and is not the great event which the French Republic are celebrating. To a certain extent it may be true that the States General were opened by the King and that the whole French nation celebrated the meeting with enthusiasm, but I have no hesitation in saying that the French at this moment are celebrating that event, not as a Royal episode, but as the beginning of a long chain of episodes which culminated in the French Revolution. There is a solidarity between the meeting of the States General and the subsequent sanguinary events of the Revolution to which we cannot shut our eyes, and by giving a kind of prestige to the opening of the French Exhibition, we acknowledge the events of the French Revolution subsequent to the meeting of the States General. It has been said that England did not withdraw her Ambassador in 1792; but the French King was not disposed until August 1792, and the country, though engaged in a revolution, was not turned into a Republic until after that date. It was entirely inconsistent, therefore, to regard the opening of the States General and the celebration of that date as the beginning of the French Revolution.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester): There are one or two words which I should like to say before this discussion closes. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down hit the right nail on the head when he indicated that the real matter of interest with the French people in regard to the Revolution was the substitution of a Republic for a Monarchy. I believe it is that which they have most of all in mind. When they speak of the Revolution they do not refer to the massacres of September, or to the dreadful events which followed, but to the change from a Monarchical to a Republican form of Government. To 90 out of 100 French people this great Exhibition is an identification of the French nation with the Republic. It is a celebration of the industry and progress which have followed the establishment of a Republic in France. We can well afford to sympathise with them in their patriotism, and wish them prosperity and peace. Frenchmen themselves say that the Republic is that which divides them least. Perhaps hon. Gentlemen opposite will take advantage of that wise saying to remark that therefore there are divisions in the French Republic. But there are divisions among us, and if there are anti-Republicans in France, there are also anti-Monarchists in this country, and the French people have just as much right to say that we are enemies to the Monarchy, as we have to say that they are enemies to the Republic. In my opinion a deplorable act of discourtesy has been committed towards the French nation, and I trust that such a number of Members will be found to vote for the Amendment in order to show their dissatisfaction at the course which has been taken, as will prove to the French people that there are a large number of persons in this country who are assured of the future, and are not always maudlin over the past, who heartily sympathise with the French people in celebrating one of the most glorious events of their history, and who wish them prosperity and peace in the future.

The House divided:—Ayes 283; Noes 190.—(Div. List No. 129.)

CRUELTIES IN ARMENIA.

Question again proposed, "That the House do agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

*MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): Before this vote is agreed to, I feel bound to call attention to the accounts which have reached this country of the cruelties and oppressions which have been recently committed in Armenia; and to the unsatisfactory character of the answers which have been given by Her Majesty's Government to the questions which have been put to them on the subject. I have, therefore, risen to state very shortly to the House the essential facts of the case. The House is doubtless aware that for a long time before the war of 1877, there had been great oppression practised by the Turks, and great suffering among the Christian population of Asiatic Turkey. The Treaty of San Stefano contained a promise of reform made by the Porte to Russia, and when the Treaty of San Stefano was superseded by the Treaty of Berlin, Article 61 was inserted in the latter instrument, by which Turkey became bound to the six signatory Powers to protect the Armenian population against the Kurds and Circassians, and to carry out reforms in its Asiatic provinces. The same obligation, in a slightly different form, was undertaken by the Porte to this country, in the so-called Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1878, whereby a separate promise was made to Great Britain, in return for which we undertook to protect the Asiatic frontier of Turkey. We have thus a double right, and a double moral obligation to the Christians of the East. Consuls were sent out by the then Government to examine into the condition of the provinces, and study the frontier, and their reports form an interesting, but at the same time a melancholy, record, to which I would refer any hon. Member who may feel inclined to doubt the accuracy of the facts I am about to state. Several blue books were published, and a summary of their contents will be found in the dispatches of Sir Henry Layard and Mr. Goschen. Sir Henry Layard was no enemy of the Turks, but rather be inclined to say the best he could for them, and to shield their misdeeds from the censure of Western Europe. He had, however, described Turkish misgovernment and apathy in language so clear and decided as to leave no doubt on any fair mind. The reports of the Consuls continued to be published down to the year 1881, and the last report from any Consul appeared in the month of February, in that year. I call attention to that date because from that date there has been no report at all from any of our Consuls as to the condition of Armenia or Asia Minor. Some of the Consuls have been withdrawn, but a certain number are still there, and they are amply sufficient, with the knowledge they have acquired of the country, to furnish us with reports which would be highly instructive and to examine into the accounts of atrocities which from time to time reach us. In 1880, when the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was sent as special envoy to Constantinople, efforts were made to induce the Porte to undertake reform, and these efforts were renewed by Lord Dufferin down to 1882; but from that time until now we have had no information at all as to what has been done by any Government in the way of remonstrating with the Turks for unquestionable instances of cruelty, nor have we received any official account of the state of the country and the action of the Consuls. A strong remonstrance is understood to have been addressed to the Sultan in 1886, but the dispatch which contained it has never been presented to Parliament. But although the Government have obstinately refused all information, everybody knows that nothing has been done by the Turkish Government to carry out any of the promised reforms. The present condition of the country is quite as bad as it has ever been at any time within living memory. Numbers of persons have been thrown into prison, and some of these subjected to torture by the Turkish officials. Others have been sent to languish in exile. These things are done, sometimes at the caprice of a tyrannical governor or as a means of extortion;

sometimes on groundless suspicions of conspiracies, and the victims have not even the consolation of knowing that an account of their sufferings had reached the ears of Western Europe through those very British Consuls whom they had looked to as sent out to protect them. Even worse than the cruelties perpetrated by the Turkish officials are those which the Turkish Government either connives at or is unable to restrain. I mean those which are wrought by the local Mussulman magistrates and the nomad Kurds. The House may remember that during the last few weeks there have been repeated telegrams announcing that fresh outrages have been perpetrated by the Kurdish tribes. One case reported is that a Kurdish chief a few weeks ago seized the head man of an Armenian village, against whom he had a grudge, bound him on a pile of wood, poured petroleum over his body, and then set the faggots on fire. Moussa Bey, who did this, is a friend of the Turkish Governor of the district, and though the Turkish Government now pretend that they wish to arrest and punish him, it is notorious that the Governor made no attempt to interfere with his barbarities. In another case, a Christian village was attacked and plundered, the inhabitants were driven in when they tried to escape, and, when the outlets had been blocked, the place was set on fire. I might recount hundreds of cases in which innocent people have been murdered; in which Christian girls have been carried off by force from their parents and consigned to a harem, on the pretext that they had embraced Mohamedanism; in which churches have been despoiled or defiled, and all without any effort, or apparently any wish on the part of the Government to punish the guilty persons. One instance may show how brutal is the behaviour of the Government itself. About a year ago a schoolboy of 17, named Sumpad, had written for his own pleasure, and with no ulterior object, some verses in which there were one or two patriotic expressions. These verses were shown to the schoolmaster, who reprimanded him for referring to politics, and told him to destroy them. The poor boy had no idea of publishing his exercise, but he unfortunately kept a copy of it, and the Turkish Officials having somehow found the verses in his possession, he was arrested for having written them, thrown into prison and treated so cruelly that he died, and the schoolmaster though he had bidden the lad to destroy the verses was imprisoned also, and so far as I can learn is in prison still. In Erzeroum there has been a panic, and it would seem a perfectly groundless panic among the Turkish authorities; a great number of respectable Christian inhabitants have been thrown into prison on mere suspicion and are kept without trial. I would ask hon. Members to read the Blue Books of 1880 and 1881 and compare the accounts given there with those contained in the recent telegrams, and they will find that the state of things is precisely the same as that which was described by Sir Henry Layard in 1880. Not only has the Turkish Government made no efforts to put down the evils which exist, or to check the proceedings of the Kurds, it aggravates the disorders by depriving the Armenian people of weapons, while their persecutors are well armed. Colonies of Circassians are brought into the country, and the whole policy of the Turkish Government would make one believe that they were following out the principle laid down by a Turkish Prime Minister some years ago, when he said that the way to get rid of the Armenian question was to get rid of the Armenians. If this be a true statement of the present condition of the country, I shall be asked for what particular purpose I bring the matter before the House. My object, in the first place, is to make the House acquainted with the reported facts, so that there may be a proper inquiry into the statements that reach us, and that it may be ascertained how far the reports in the newspapers are true. If the facts are true, then I ask Her Majesty's Government to address to the Turkish Government those remonstrances which they are not only bound by common humanity, but by Treaty obligations to address. I know from sad experience what is the kind of answer I may expect from the right hon. Gentleman opposite in regard to these statements. He will say that they are exaggerated. That was said not

long ago by the Prime Minister. I think it throws some light on Lord Salisbury's state of mind when we find him quoting, as a witness of the good order in the country, the Turkish Ambassador. He might have remembered what took place in 1876. Several months elapsed before we succeeded in extracting the horrible truths concerning the Bulgarian atrocities, at which the conscience of Europe stood aghast, and the Turkish Government unblushingly denied the whole hideous story. What reason is there to believe any statement of the Turkish Ambassador? He is sent here by his Government to attempt to deceive and mislead us. And as an instance of the value of his statements, I may observe that the excuse which he made to Lord Salisbury, and which Lord Salisbury was not ashamed to repeat in another place, viz. that the Kurds could not be restrained, because they came across the frontier from Persia, cannot possibly apply to these outrages by Moussa Bey, because Moussa Bey's quarters are thirteen days' journey from the Persian frontier, and the plain of Mush, where these outrages occurred, is at least 130 miles, as the crow flies, from that frontier. I cannot help adverting to an incident which happened here in London, which shows the temper and spirit in which Lord Salisbury approaches the question, and that is the domiciliary visits paid under the auspices of Lord Salisbury and the Home Secretary to a house in Bayswater which was inhabited by two gentlemen who were conducting an Armenian journal, conducting it with moderation, and with no attempt to stir up disaffection among the unfortunate subjects of the Sultan, however natural disaffection may be, but simply to give a true and faithful account of what goes on daily in Asiatic Turkey. This journal had excited the displeasure of the Turkish Government, and they asked Her Majesty's Government to suppress it. Lord Salisbury answered, probably with regret, that he had no legal power to suppress it, but he and the Home Secretary despatched two policemen belonging to the Criminal Investigation Department of Scotland Yard to the lodgings occupied by the conductors of the journal to make inquiries regarding their mode of life, the names of the persons who visited them, the publication of their journal, and so forth; and these officers cross-examined the owner of the house, and procured from him a copy of the journal. The times have been when this would have been considered an act entirely inconsistent with the principles of freedom which we have been accustomed in this country to respect. That our police should make domiciliary visits, and conduct inquisitorial examinations at the instance of a Foreign power is, I think, and would have been considered, till the days of the present Government, a gross scandal. Such acts are doubly a scandal when they are done at the instance of a Power which has disregarded all legitimate representations we have made, which oppresses and maltreats its own subjects, and which takes umbrage at the publication in this free country of a journal which contains nothing but a fair and honest statement of the facts which daily occur in the dominions of the Sultan. Now I know the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary, will say that to address any remonstrances to the Turkish Government, or to make any inquiries on the spot or even to publish the Consular Reports and despatches for which we ask will only have the effect of further irritating the Turks. He will probably say also that the papers were not published from 1881 to 1885, and again in 1886, when a Liberal Government was for a few months in office. But I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that there were reasons existing in 1883 and 1884, and even in 1886 for the non-publication of the papers up to those dates which do not exist now. If he says that to produce these papers or to address remonstrances to the Porte would only have the effect of further irritating the Turks, and aggravating the sufferings of the Eastern Christians, I entirely differ from him. There is not the slightest evidence that the Turks have ever behaved the least bit better when we have abstained from remonstrating, or that they have ever behaved substantially worse when we have remonstrated. I believe, on the contrary, that the best chance—it is, perhaps, a slight one—of procuring some amelioration in the condition of the Christian people of Asiatic Turkey is to endeavour to convey to the

Turkish Government the sense of shame and indignation which we feel when we read of the occurrences in Armenia. I think that if Her Majesty's Government were to insist upon the fulfilment by Turkey of her obligations, if they were to put it to the Turkish Government that any such sympathies for the Sultan as remain in this country—they, no doubt, are very slight—are being alienated, that it is becoming daily less and less possible to defend the Sultan's Government or to justify its continued existence, they might have some chance of producing an effect upon the Sultan's mind. They might point out to the Turkish Government that it is repeating in Asia the self-destructive course of policy which it pursued long ago in Europe. It lost Herzegovina, Bosnia, and Bulgaria, because it refused to reform the administration of those regions. It created disaffection, justified insurrection, and made foreign intervention necessary. The same train of events seems likely to recur in Asia; and nothing but a change of policy can save the Sultanate from extinction. If the Government were to say frankly that they think it is no use making any remonstrances, that the Turks are determined to disregard any remonstrances, and to rush on their own destruction, I own I do not know what more I can say, unless I am prepared to propose some act of positive intervention. That is a point I do not raise. But Her Majesty's Government never have said that remonstrances are useless, and I do not believe they would be wholly useless, if they were made with proper vigour. The Government have always answered that when they see an appropriate occasion they will address remonstrances, though they have never told us whether they do remonstrate, and how the remonstrance is received, and what effect it produces. They keep us altogether in the dark. I think we are fully entitled to ask the Government what they are doing and what they mean to do; to ask them whether it would not be right to direct our Consuls to inquire into the truth of the allegations, whether it would not be right to invite the representatives of other Powers to hold an inquiry. Eleven years have passed since the obligation of putting an end to their disorders and oppressions was undertaken under the Treaty of Berlin. The time surely has come when the Powers may take stock of the position, and endeavour to ascertain whether anything has been done, or is likely to be done, to carry out the engagements of 1878. On these grounds I venture once more to submit that we are entitled to have some declaration of policy from the Government, and I warn the Government that the continued neglect of this question tarnishes the fair fame of England, and may result in consequences which all would deplore.

SIR J. KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton): On previous occasions I have had the honour of helping my hon. Friend to bring this matter before the House. I have always felt that this is a question which ought to be removed from Party politics, and one on which both sides of the House could unite. I regret that on this occasion my hon. Friend, carried away by his argument, has abandoned his usual impartiality, and sought to make a serious attack upon Her Majesty's Government, which I do not think is altogether deserved. What I desire to particularly point out is that, being responsible as we are for the Treaty of Berlin, we have very great obligations, as a nation, in regard to the Armenian people. It was owing to our action that Turkey was able to escape from the grip of Russia at a time when she was practically at the mercy of that Power. Russia has always been ready to come forward as the friend of the Armenians, and they have had great temptation to throw themselves into the arms of Russia. It was considered very desirable that that should be checked. They were checked by us, and therefore Great Britain has incurred great responsibilities. I recognize the extreme difficulty of the situation. I recognize what was emphasized by Lord Salisbury, the impossibility of making remonstrances if we have not the power or the determination to back up to those remonstrances by force of arms. Things are different to what they were when Lord Stratford de Redcliffe's word was law, to a great extent, at Constantinople. The English people are bound to show their sympathy with the Armenians in every

way, and the Government ought to use its moral influence in their behalf. Further, the House should be informed of the real state of affairs, which can only be obtained from the Consular Reports. I will merely add my request to the one already made that the Government should look into the matter.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I should be sorry if it were imagined that I do not share the sympathy which the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) has expressed for the unhappy people of Armenia. It has been admitted by officials of all parties that there is in Asia Minor a state of things exceedingly lamentable, a weakness of government, a want of authority, a recurrence of outrages and consequent severe suffering to innocent people as well as the fertile dangers arising from religious jealousies. I hope that things are not so bad as they have been, and that there is a greater desire and more earnest effort on the part of the Ottoman Government to protect the Armenians, to choose better administrators, and to withdraw and disgrace Governors who are unworthy of their trusts, to improve the police, and generally to remove the blots that have rested on the Government of the country in past times. I believe that this has been the desire of the Sultan himself; but I should be deceiving the House if I were to say that the efforts have been successful to the desired extent, and that there remain no signs of misgovernment and its miserable consequences. That good order which it is desirable to see established in Asia Minor is still a long way off. At the same time, it would be surprising if particular events had not been greatly exaggerated. Hon. Members may have read in the newspapers of a certain outrage committed by Kurdish marauders in an Armenian village—namely, the boiling alive of a bride. I have reason to believe that such an incident did not take place; but that there have been raids, outrages, maraudings, and cruelties from time to time I am afraid is the case. The hon. Member for Aberdeen has complained that he has no recent information. Of course, Her Majesty's representatives report from time to time, and the Government is served in Asia Minor and Armenia by officers who are well able to distinguish truth from falsehood. But the present Government is not responsible for the non-publication of reports for the whole of the period since 1881. The reports were not published between 1881 and 1885, and have not been for three years since. I am quite sure that the Government in which the hon. Member for Aberdeen served had good grounds for not publishing the reports during their term of office; and there may be reasons existing at the present time equally valid. For example, it is not desirable to gibbet the officials of the Turkish Empire by publishing broadcast to the world all the stories which reach Her Majesty's Government of the sad defects of government in Asia Minor. I am of opinion that more may be done by remonstrance and representation to the Porte than by holding the Government up to the eyes of the world as wicked and incapable. Representations are made from time to time when sufficient ground for them appears, and they are not always without effect. With regard to the recent occurrences, Sir William White has been instructed to make representations to the Porte as soon as he receives full particulars. I can assure the House that in view of the position which Great Britain holds towards Turkey, it has always been considered by the Foreign Office during the time I have had any connection with that office, the duty of Her Majesty's Government to offer counsel and remonstrance to the Sultan's Government when there was fitting occasion; but the counsel or remonstrance should be offered in such a way as to produce compliance and not resistance. Care especially should be taken that they are made in a manner that is not calculated to offend or insult the high officials of the Ottoman Empire. No greater mistake could be made in dealing with an Oriental Power than to humiliate the Sovereign in the face of the world. It is suggested that this country should invite the Powers to join in a common inquiry into the matter of the Armenians. The obligations of Great Britain under the Treaty of Berlin are joint obligations, and Her Majesty's Government have no right under that Treaty to intervene separately in

the affairs of the Turkish Empire. The hon. Member for Aberdeen knows how difficult a thing it is to obtain the joint action of the Powers of Europe in such a matter as that under discussion. The various Powers have, more or less, objects of their own ends to serve, and, therefore, no thing is more difficult to obtain than united action. To resort to united action of the Powers without absolute necessity would really tend to weaken the Ottoman Government by that process of humiliation which I have indicated as being most desirable to avoid, and perhaps also to loosen still more the props of its authority. I venture to think that such a course should only be resorted to in the last extremity. In such a situation as the Armenians now are, it cannot possibly be hoped that in a short time they should enjoy the blessings of civilization. What is the state of things? It is not that there is a province inhabited by a particular race called Armenians, but there are many Armenians scattered up and down over a great area, mixed with other populations and other religions of varying degrees of civilization or barbarism; and the near neighbourhood of the Persian frontier also makes it easy for tribes more or less nomadic, to descend upon villages and enrich themselves by despoiling their neighbours, committing outrages of greater or less cruelty, according to their nature. And when we remember how comparatively short a time since even in our own island raids by Highland or Border clans were not unknown—how religious antipathies exist even to this day in the sister island, although they are controlled by all the resources of civilization, and also what painful incidents and outrages sometimes occur there, I do not think we, in civilization, should be too keen to mark what is done amiss in a country which is so much less advanced than our own. I can assure the House Her Majesty's Government are well aware of evils existing, and are not, and have not, been unmindful of the responsibilities we have assumed towards that region. We have not been remiss when opportunity offered and duty seemed to require it, to bring under the notice of the Government of the Sultan, in his own interest and the interest of his Empire, the necessity of checking these disorders, and urge the need of better Government. I believe that our remonstrances have been equal to our duty, and that if we were to resort to the means which the hon. Member recommends they would do more harm than good.

MR. GLADSTONE: I know the great difficulties the Government have to contend with in every question of this kind. I make no doubt of them at all, and consequently there is nothing in the shape of positive obsection that I am prepared to take to the proceedings of the Government, with one exception, with the knowledge that would justify such criticism. The exception is a matter referred to by my hon. Friend near me, and as to which we have some knowledge of the facts, and that is the raid, as I may call it, by the police upon an Armenian newspaper. Now I say an Armenian newspaper instead of being regarded by the Government as an object of suspicion ought to be viewed with favour by us. Everything that tends to check outrages ought to be regarded with favour The facts are not known to us. I am not making that the matter of complaint, but we ought to consider that an organ which is intended to give the public knowledge on these subjects is deserving of encouragement rather than of discountenance. Instead of that, however, we find that the agency of Her Majesty's Government was used to supply the Turkish Government with information as to the conductors of that newspaper; and I ask whether there is anything in the conduct of the Turkish Government in respect to Armenia which entitles them to this favour? No doubt the moral effect produced by that act was that the conductors of that paper were regarded at least as persons in a suspected position and engaged in an enterprise which justified such suspicion. Apart from the proceedings of the Government, on which I am not prepared to found any charge, because I have no justification for doing so, there was one portion of the speech of

the right hon. Gentleman which I heard with profound regret. The right hon. Gentleman has just made a speech than which, in my opinion, none more discouraging to the friends of humanity has ever been delivered in this House. The right hon. Gentleman said he anticipated great good from remonstrances addressed to the Turkish Government, provided they were made in a form that would not offend. No good ever came from any remonstrance with the Turkish Government if it was made in terms that did not offend. The man who really made remonstrances with the Turkish Government effective—I am making no reflection or comparison to the depreciation of the present representative of Her Majesty at Constantinople, for whom I have the highest respect, but the man who was historically successful in obtaining results from the Turkish Government was Lord Stratford de Redcliffe; but it was not his distinction that he made his remonstrances in terms that did not offend. He made his remonstrances in terms that were intelligible, and intelligibility in dealing with the Turkish Government means pointing to painful results. The right hon. Gentleman as a humane man deeply regretted the state of things in Armenia, but he said there had been exaggeration. Referring to the particular case of a person who was stated to have been burned to death, the right hon. Gentleman said he believed that the occurrence did not take place.

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: The case to which I alluded was that in which a girl was said to have been boiled to death.

MR. GLADSTONE: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for his correction. Yes, the cause of death was the application of heat in a liquid form. I observe that in no single case was the right hon. Gentleman able to give his authority for saying an outrage did not take place. I know not whether his authority was the Turkish Ambassador. I have not a word to say against the Turkish Ambassanor; it is the duty of the Turkish Ambassador to receive as true the reports furnished to him by his Government; but I will not hesitate to say that in 1876 reports that were most grossly and abominably false were sent to Musurus Pasha by the Turkish Government, and were treated by him as true, for which I find no fault with that most amiable and, in many points, respected personage; it was his duty to receive the reports as true. But my hon. Friend has mentioned the case of a village inhabited by Armenians, where the people were absolutely compressed into the village and confined there in order that when fire was applied to the place they might be all destroyed in a mass, and that fire was so applied with that result. That statement of my hon. Friend the right hon. Gentleman has not contradicted. The right hon. Gentleman said there is improvement in the condition of Armenia, but he has given no single indication of what that improvement is. Why has he not pointed to some acts of the Turkish Executive Government, to some laws and some practical measures taken to make those laws operative? I have no doubt had it been in his power the right hon. Gentleman would have done so, as it would have been his duty to do. But his optimistic impression of the condition of things in Armenia has not been supported by a single verifying detail. It is eleven years since we made a convention with Turkey binding the Sultan in the most solemn form to introduce effectual reforms in the administration of Armenia, but not one single point is alleged in which he has fulfilled his engagement. Under the circumstances if we cannot be informed that this improvement, that improvement, and the other improvement has been made, to talk of improvement in general and to say that things are better than they were before, is offering us husks instead of food, and paltering with the interests involved in a great and most important subject. I sympathize with the right hon. Gentleman up to a certain point in the matter of these remonstrances. I consider Lord Stratford de Redcliffe was possessed of extraordinary gifts by which he contrived to do good without resort to actual force, but I conceive that every Government is in this position, that if it remonstrates in mild terms its remonstrances are idle words, waste of breath. If you remonstrate in strong terms there is another difficulty, because

if the strong terms are not effectual, and come to be repeated again and again, a series of such remonstrances is incompatible with the dignity of the country, making them useless unless it is prepared to resort to some act of forcible intervention. Therefore, I do not disguise the difficulty. I do not presume to censure Her Majesty's Government; but I do lament the attempt of the right hon. Gentleman to set up his optimising doctrines where we have not the smallest solid ground afforded us for his comforting assurances. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the fact that the Reports of the Consuls ceased to be furnished in or about the year 1881. I am at a loss to know why, and I have some difficulty in imagining that the publication of Consular Reports has ceased for all time, or that there could be any justification for withholding them. Consuls are supposed to keep their eyes open and to report facts regarding the people among whom they live, and it is altogether a new idea that their Reports are to be regarded as confidential documents. If they are to be so, that is simply condemning the Consuls' Reports to perpetual barrenness and absolute inutility. Why are not Consular Reports to be made, and, being made, why are they not to be printed? If in this respect I am personally, or any one associated with me, is open to censure, let the facts be brought out; but do not let a particular act at a particular time be confounded with the adoption of the principle of eternal silence about the horrors that prevail in Armenia. Public opinion must be brought to bear upon this case. It is a great power, and I am afraid that public opinion and that other power of threat of force which we are not in a condition to appeal to are the only powers likely to produce any sensible improvement in the condition of the people of Armenia. But there is one thing not without importance. In the Cyprus Convention we have an instrument of some force in our dealings with the Government of Turkey. On the one hand the Sultan is bound to introduce reforms into Armenia, and if he does the British Government are bound to assist him in maintaining his sovereignty over that country. It is in our power to warn the Sultan that the non-introduction of reforms will utterly destroy his title to British aid. A warning has been given many years ago; it ought to be repeated, and he should be given plainly to understand that under no circumstances will misdeeds in Armenia be tolerated; but I am afraid that the countenance that has been given to misdeeds in Armenia had been fatal to the happiness of the people of that unfortunate country. Our power has been used, it ought to be used, and I trust it will be used again. We are under obligation to my hon. Friend who introduced the subject and to the right hon. Baronet who followed him, whose sincerity I do not question, but it is necessary that he should brace himself to a somewhat more energetic conception of the subject and method of proceeding than that of which he has given a specimen in some portion of his speech.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): Before this discussion closes I think there is another question which probably we shall not have another opportunity of raising. At this moment the condition of Europe is admitted on all hands to be critical, and I do not remember a time when so little information has been given to the House respecting our foreign relations.

It being ten minutes to seven of the clock, Mr. Speaker rose to interrupt the business.

Whereupon Mr. William Henry Smith rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes 224, Noes 126. (Div. List, No. 130.)

Question, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution," put acccordingly, and agreed to.

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

The House was adjourned at five minutes after Nine o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 12.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [JUNE 6.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 29th May, 1889.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Horseflesh (Sale for Food) Bill, with Amendments; Amendments to be considered forthwith; considered, and agreed to.

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 249.]

QUESTIONS.

FLOGGING PRISONERS.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many men have been flogged in Portsea Convict Prison since 1st January, 1889; and, what were their offences?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I have not yet had time to obtain information from the authorities of the prison. I must, therefore, ask the hon. Member to have the goodness to postpone the question.

MR. BLANE: I will repeat it on Friday.

ASSAULTS BY THE POLICE AND EMERGENCY MEN.

MR. BLANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that James M'Ginty and others have been assaulted by police and emergency men whilst in custody of authorities; and, if Government will make the necessary inquiry as to the facts of the case? The question has reference to the wounding of James M'Ginty after he was in custody.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University Dublin): A Report has been called for on the subject, but it has not yet been received. I must, therefore, ask the hon. Member to postpone the question.

MR. BLANE: I will repeat it on Friday.

ASCENSION DAY. COMMITTEES.

Ordered, that Committees shall not sit To-morrow, being Ascension Day, until Two of the clock.—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

POOR RATE (METROPOLIS) BILL. (No. 23.)

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): In rising to move the Second Reading of this Bill, it is desirable that I should state briefly for the information of the House, and especially for the information of hon. Members who do not represent the Metropolis, what the gross inequalities are of which we complain. I find from the latest Return, for the year ending March, 1888, that the poor rate in Bromley was 2s. 10d. in the £, for Bethnal Green 2s. 10d., and for Holborn 3s. On the other hands I find that in Westminter the poor rate was 1s. 7d. in the £, in St. George's, Hanover Square 1s. 8d., in Kensington

1s. 10d., and in the City of London it was actually only 1s. It is right, however, to mention that the poor rate in the City does not include the police rate and the county rate, although the latter are included in the poor rate for the rest of the Metropolis. I add, therefore, a corresponding sum in order to make the comparison fair, and the result is that the poor rate for the City of London is 1s. 6d. in the £. This anomaly, gross as it is, is aggravated by the fact, that as a rule the poorest districts are the most heavily rated. That will clearly appear if the Western District of London is compared as a whole with the Eastern District. The Western District comprises Kensington, Paddington, Chelsea, Fulham, St. George's, Hanover Square, and Westminster, and over that district there is an average poor rate of 1s. 10d. in the £. On the other hand, if we take the Eastern District—Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, Whitechapel, St. George's-in-the-East, Mile End, Stepney, and Poplar, it will be found that 2s. 5d. is the average rate. In this comparison no notice has been taken of a provision which was inserted in the Local Government Act of last Session to the effect that out of a Central Fund 4d. a day for every indoor pauper shall be paid to the several Boards of Guardians. The first result of that provision we know to our cost. It has been to raise the rate levied by the London County Council by 2½d. in the £. That fact appears from a statement published the other day by Lord Rosebery on behalf of the Council. That, I say, is the first result. What the net result of this provision will be in the several unions nobody knows; but I have estimated roughly what the effect will be in some cases. In the first place, what will the effect be upon the rich districts? I find that in Westminster and St. George's, Hanover Square, there will be a net loss of about 1d. in the £. Hence, while the rates are now in those two localities 1s. 7d. and 1s. 8d. respectively, they will be eventually 1s. 8d. and 1s. 9d. respectively, so that the House will see that the effect of this provision in levelling up the burden in the lightly rated districts will be very slight indeed. In the poorer districts it is quite true that the 4d. grant will, in some cases, considerably relieve the rates, but its operation will be extremely unequal, and will, in fact, bring into existence new inequalities. For instance, if I compare Bromley with St. George's-in-the-East, both of which are in the eastern part of London, not very far apart, I find that in Bromley the net gain resulting from this provision will be 1½d. in the £, and will leave the rate at 2s. 8½d. In St. George's-in-the-East, of which the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Ritchie) knows something, the net gain will be as high as 9½d. in the £, thus leaving the rate at 1s. 5d., and it certainly appears to be somewhat extraordinary that while in one part of the East of London the rate should be 2s. 8½d. in the £, in another part of East London it should be as low as 1s. 5d. Having thus shown how inadequate are the fancy expedients which have been devised in order to readjust these glaring discrepancies, I hope that I have cleared the way for the favourable consideration of this Bill. There are those in London, and I think they are a growing body, who advocate the equalization of all Metropolitan rates. It is not necessary now to discuss the propriety of such a change, because I think the poor rate occupies a unique position, and deserves separate consideration. In the first place it must be obvious that in every great Metropolis the poor will be found to congregate in particular districts, and that which is a natural tendency has been aggravated in London by modern improvements. Take, for instance, the City of London. Within comparatively recent years the narrow streets of the City have been replaced by broad and commodious thoroughfares. The sites of these thoroughfares used to be covered by a swarming population. The City Authorities ruthlessly dispossessed them, with the result that they crowded into the parishes bordering on the City which were already overcrowded, and for some years have been helping to swell the poor rate of the district—already a burden almost too heavy to bear. I think that any fair-minded man will at once come to the conclusion that the City of London, with its 1s. 6d. of a poor rate, should not be permitted, in this way, to divest itself of its liabilities in regard to the poor. The poor of the Metropolis constitute a common interest to all the ratepayers of the Metropolis.

Mr. Pickersgill

That is the basis of the Bill, and it therefore proposes that the whole cost of poor relief should be defrayed by a rate levied equally over the whole of the Metropolitan area. That is the principle on which the Bill is based, and, I may remark, that it is not a new principle. It was introduced first, tentatively, in 1864 by the Homeless Poor Act; secondly, in 1867, on a large scale, by the establishment of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. Since then, at various times, it has been extended, and its operation now covers about 43 per cent of the entire cost of poor relief. The Common Fund is now worked under a system which leaves the initiative and the management to the separate Boards of Guardians, subject to the supervision and the supreme control of the Local Government Board. Now that system and that machinery we adopt in making the whole cost of poor relief a charge common to the Metropolis, with this alteration only—we substitute for the Local Government Board a Central Authority which I will presently specify. We might have framed this Bill on different lines. We might have taken the London School Board as our model and have substituted for the Boards of Guardians mere Committees or delegates of the Central Authority. But we deliberately rejected that plan because we feared excessive centralization, which is always risky, and would be out of place and peculiarly liable to abuse in the administration of the Poor Law. We, therefore, interfere as little as possible with the Boards of Guardians, but at the same time, as the expenditure of the Guardians will come out of a Common Fund provided by the whole of London, it seems essential that the Guardians should be, to some degree, placed under the control of a Central Authority representing the entire body of ratepayers and enjoying their confidence. Here, again, we had two courses open to us. We might have created an entirely new body in London; we might have created such a body on the lines of the Bill introduced in 1884 by the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt). But it seemed to us that the multiplication of authorities in the Metropolis is to be deprecated. On the other hand, we found already in existence and as it were waiting for us an authority which exactly corresponded to our requirements—I refer to the London County Council. We, therefore, adopt the London County Council as the Central Authority who is to have the supreme control in the matter. There is an objection that may possibly be urged with some force, and therefore I think it right to allude to it. It may be said that the London County Council have work enough already before them. ["Hear, hear."] I hear the response to the remark, and I rather anticipated it from the other side of the House, but it seems to me that the London County Council, having the vigour and the confidence of youth, will not be unwilling to accept this charge, and, what is of much more importance, I am disposed to think the ratepayers of London will not refuse to give the trust to the London County Council. If, however, it should appear that the County Council, as at present constituted, have too much work to do the remedy is easy. You can increase the number of the new County Council; you can add for each constituency a fresh member. I venture to think that it will be far better to strengthen an existing authority when the authority is thoroughly representative than to multiply the bodies which at present exist in London. It is obviously desirable that some touch should be maintained between the County Council which will have the control, and the Guardians, which will have the initiative. It is proposed that this touch should be maintained in this way—that the representatives in the County Council of the area of each Metropolitan Union should be *ex officio* members of the Board of Guardians for that Union. On the other hand, we propose that the Magistrates, as such, should no longer have seats on the Boards of Guardians, and I rather think that provision will commend itself to the ratepayers of London. We propose, also, that the County Council should take over the powers of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, which is at present the Central London Authority for the Poor Law. I do unhesitatingly say that the Metropolitan Asylums Board has not the confidence generally of the ratepayers of London, and I do not think that it deserves to have their confidence. It appears, unfortunately, to

have some kind of occult influence with the Local Government Board which ought to control it, and even at the present moment the Local Government Board are about to give their sanction to a proposal to grant a gratuity of £500 without a shadow of either legal or moral justification, to Dr. M'Kenna, whose office has become extinct. Now I claim the sympathy of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, who has said that it will be expedient when a Central Authority is constituted that the powers of the Asylums Board should merge in the new body. With regard to indoor relief I think I shall probably meet with less opposition than in regard to outdoor relief, upon which I propose to say a word or two presently. As a matter of fact, the case with regard to indoor relief is comparatively simple. It is only necessary to extend the machinery already in operation under the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund to precisely analogous expenditure. At present the entire cost of the maintenance of the children in poor schools and of casuals in the casual wards is charged on the Common Fund. It is perfectly clear that we can in like manner, without any risk of extravagance, put upon the Common Fund the maintenance of the inmates of the workhouses and infirmaries and other Poor Law institutions. We make provision in this Bill for the better distribution of indoor poor over the Metropolis. At present there is a considerable waste of accommodation. In one Union you have a workhouse overcrowded, or the authorities are proceeding to build a new workhouse, whereas, in other parts of London the workhouses are not nearly filled. We propose, therefore, that the London County Council shall have powers to distribute the indoor poor, so as to make the existing accommodation fully available; and we propose also to give the Local Government Board power to assign certain workhouses for particular classes of the poor. We hope in this way to secure a more effective classification than at present exists. I feel that, apart from the mere question of adjusting the financial burden, it is extremely desirable that outdoor relief should be embraced within this Bill. What we mainly suffer from now is the absolute absence of agreement between the different Boards of Guardians as to the principles on which outdoor relief should be distributed. All will agree that it is a most mischievous thing that, upon one side of an imaginary line in London, you should have Boards of Guardians giving relief with a lavish hand, whilst on the other side of the line relief is scarcely given at all, although the conditions may be precisely the same. That is the difficulty which particularly attracted the attention of the Committee upon Poor Law relief which sat last year. In their Report the Committee say:—

> "There are wide divergences in the system of administration of outdoor relief pursued by various metropolitan Boards of Guardians, and admitting that the Guardians should, within certain limits, be able to adapt their policy to the particular circumstances of each district, it cannot be regarded as satisfactory that there should be in adjoining districts such a marked difference in practice as now sometimes exists."

We endeavour by this Bill to meet that difficulty. It is not proposed to interfere with the general powers now possessed by the Local Government Board, but in the first place we provide that every Board of Guardians in the Metropolis shall be required to frame bye-laws prescribing the conditions upon which outdoor relief will be given within the Union, and we add that these bye-laws must receive the sanction of the London County Council, and that in the absence of agreement between the two bodies the Local Government Board shall frame bye-laws. In the second place, we provide that each Board of Guardians shall furnish a weekly list of all persons receiving outdoor relief to the London County Council, and in the third place we give power to the London County Council to appoint officers for the purpose of securing the due execution of these bye-laws. In some very large urban unions, and particularly, I think, in Liverpool, where separate Committees of the Guardians distribute relief, this plan has been adopted in order to prevent extravagance in different districts. There have been appointed a number of officers who are called "surprise" visitors; they work from the centre, and their duty is to keep a check upon the district guardians and the district relieving officers. As regards the payment of such officers in London, there is

a provision in the Bill by which a sum would be saved which, I should think, would about defray the expenditure. We provide that a poor person shall no longer be removable from one metropolitan parish to another under the law of settlement. The President of the Local Government Board granted me a return a little while ago which showed the average cost of these removals within the metropolitan area to be close upon £1,000 a year. That sum would be saved, and so we should have a surplus out of which these officers might be paid. I have now described how, as we hope, uniformity will be secured where it is desirable, whilst at the same time we think the provisions of the Bill are sufficiently elastic to adapt themselves to the varying conditions of different districts. In conclusion, I desire to make an appeal to the President of the Local Government Board as representing the Government. On the Second Reading of a Bill we assent to the principle of the Bill. If the right hon. Gentleman will support the Second Reading of the Bill the promoters will be quite willing that the measure should go to a Select Committee, where we shall be most anxious to meet the views of the Government as to its details as far as we reasonably can. I have only one word more to say. The mere adjustment of pecuniary burdens, important as that is, is not the sole object of this Bill. We have, if I may venture to say so, a higher aim—we hope to effect large social and moral reforms in the administration of the Poor Law. The present Administration, with all its faults, is as light to darkness compared with the Administration which existed prior to the establishment of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. It is not unreasonable to hope that the extension of that well-tried system will be proportionately beneficial to the whole population of this great Metropolis, and not least to those who have a paramount claim upon us—the deserving poor. I beg to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. BAUMANN (Peckham): I beg to move as an Amendment that this Bill be read a second time this day six months, and in doing so I do not hesitate to characterize this measure as one of the most mischievous, one of the most dangerous, and in the sinister sense of the term the most socialistic of the many wild and extravagant schemes turned out apparently by the dozen by a small company of gentlemen, representing about one-sixth of the Metropolis, who have formed themselves into a syndicate for the moral, physical, and political reclamation of London at the expense of the rates. I rejoice exceedingly that by some sort of sudden and secret management between this glorious company of reformers and the Irish Members, this Bill has come to occupy the first place in the Paper today, although we discuss it at some disadvantage and with considerable inconvenience. I am not sorry at this manœuvring between Radical Members and the Irish Members, concealed from hon. Members on this side who represent five-sixths of the area affected, because this discussion, coming on the top of the Coal Dues debate of last week, will bring home to the ratepayers of London what they may expect from the ascendency of the Radical Party in London. The Bill proposes nothing else than the equalization of the total expenditure on Poor Law relief by the extension of the principle of the Metropolitan Common Fund from indoor relief to outdoor relief. I am strongly in favour of the equalization of poor rates with regard to indoor relief, because in respet to that form of relief we have the solid and inexpugnable barrier of the workhouse against extravagance and the demoralization of the poor by any system of indiscriminate assistance. But I maintain that the cost of indoor relief is now equalized as nearly as can be throughout the Metropolis by the 5d. subvention from the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund and the 4d. subvention from the County Council. To the Boards of Guardians there is paid, out of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, 5d. per head per diem, and there is also paid by the London County Council 4d. per head per diem, for purposes which—with the exception of the payment of school fees, which amounted to £1,800 a year—may be described as those of indoor relief. So there is a total subvention from central sources of 9d. per head per diem to the expenditure upon indoor paupers. It

so happens that according to the Report of the Local Government Board for last year the average cost of maintaining indoor paupers is a fraction over 10d. per head per day. The memorandum prefixed to the Bill states that the contributions from the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund covers 43 per cent of the total cost of relief expenditure in London. If a contribution of 5d. covers 43 per cent, one of 4d. will cover 34 per cent, making altogether 77 per cent of the total cost of relief covered by these contributions from a central source.

*Mr. PICKERSGILL: The hon. Member's conclusions would be perfect if his premises were sound, but they are not; 5d. a head does not anything like cover 43 per cent. There are other large subventions.

*Mr. BAUMANN: The statement is not mine, but the authors of the Bill.

*Mr. PICKERSGILL: There are other large subventions besides the 5d. a day.

*Mr. BAUMANN: That may be so, but I do not see that that affects my argument. It is a remarkable fact that the proportionate cost of outdoor relief in London for the last year was exactly 23 per cent. I submit, therefore, that the cost of indoor relief is, as nearly as may be, covered by contributions from a central source. I am sure the President of the Local Government Board will agree with me that we have gone as far as we can and dare towards equalizing the cost of poor relief by subvention from a central source. The Bill proposes that the principle of subsidizing from a central fund should be extended to the cost of outdoor relief in London. That was not the intention of the legislative authors of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund—it was not the object with which that fund was instituted, or with which the Government last Session handed over certain sources of income for the relief of local burdens. Can anything be more dangerous and demoralizing and more certain to lead to extravagance than to empower Guardians who are elected by districts of the area to give outdoor relief out of a common purse filled by contributions from the whole area? The rate may be equalized, but it will be by a process of levelling up and not by levelling down, and this can only have the effect of increasing the poor rate all over the Metropolis. I submit that the prospect of the Boards of Guardians throwing the cost of outdoor relief upon a common purse to be replenished from the whole of London is a prospect that no prudent and reflective man can regard with other feelings than those of dismay and alarm and apprehension. The Boards of Guardians are to be controlled in their ravages upon the pockets of the ratepayers by the London County Council. "Ay, there's the rub!" This Bill, after all, is not so much a Bill for subsidizing indoor relief as a Bill for the glorification of the County Council. By this Bill the Boards of Guardians and the Metropolitan Asylums Board are to be transferred from the control of the Local Government Board to the control of the London County Council. Last year it was decided that the powers, duties and liabilities of the Metropolitan Board of Works, plus the administrative functions of the Magistrates of Middlesex, Kent, and Surrey, were enough work for a new and inexperienced body to begin with. Is the agenda paper of the London County Council not long enough as it is? Why it runs now to a tolerable sized pamphlet. Is the number of Committees in which the members of that body have to serve not large enough for their appetite for their duties? In the discussions upon the Local Government Bill last year, I predicted that, by the constitution of this new body, we were creating an *imperium in imperio* which would give us some trouble and provoke some criticism hereafter, and it appears to me that my prophesy is on the high road to realization. To me, the hon. Member's proposal to remedy what he anticipates may be overburdening the County Council by doubling its members is a most extraordinary one. Now, I object to the transference of the Boards of Guardians and the Metropolitan Asylums Board to the control of the London County Council for two reasons. I object to it, in the first place, because I have a very strong opinion that the control of the administration of Poor Law relief should be vested, in the ultimate resort not in a popularly elected body, but in a Government Department. The County Councillors are elected by a lower constituency than the Guardians, and therefore to

set the Council to control the Boards of Guardians is a dangerous absurdity and a mischievous anomaly; it is the inversion of the proper order of things. I object to this transference, secondly, because I consider that the London County Council has quite enough to do at present without adding to its duties. Of course the London County Council is a new body, and nobody would wish to criticize the crowings of infancy by the canons of sober age, but I should very much like to know what my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board has to say as to the behaviour of his bantling. I should like to know what new rattle he proposes to give it to keep it quiet. Personally I protest most strongly against it being allowed to cut its teeth upon the machinery of Poor Law relief. Now there is a proposal in the Bill to throw the cost of registration of all voters—voters for the School Board, Board of Guardians, County Council, and Parliament—upon the poor rate which has already advanced, as we know so suddenly and by such large amounts. [An hon. MEMBER: "It is in the poor rate."] I wish very much the cost of the registration for Parliamentary purposes was in the poor rate ["It is."] Well, I do not know why Members and candidates are called upon to provide such large sums annually. I should very much like if the total cost of political registration could be thrown not upon the poor rate, but upon the National Exchequer, because I have always thought that the expenses of registration were unreasonably heavy. If the costs for Parliamentary registration are an old charge upon the poor rate. I have nothing to say on the point, but I am informed by the Local Government Office it is a new charge. There is also a proposal to throw on the poor rate the law expenses that may be undertaken under the assimilating influence of the County Council, and if they take to fighting private Bills before Committees upstairs, this will be no inconsiderable addition to the burdens on Metropolitan ratepayers.

*MR. J. STUART: If I explain I may save the hon. Gentleman some trouble. No new charge is proposed to be placed on the poor rate, the only difference is that charges will be removed from the local to the general rate.

*MR. BAUMANN: I am much obliged to the hon. Gentleman for his disposition to assist me. No doubt the President of the Local Government Board will deal with this when he speaks later on. I understood it was a new charge. Now I have described the Bill as dangerous and mischievous, and in the bad sense of the term it is a socialistic Bill. It is only one out of a big batch which has emanated from the new syndicate opposite for the reclamation of London. Of course the object of hon. Gentlemen is perfectly legitimate and even laudable, but I hope I may be permitted to remind the House how small a section of the Metropolis these hon. Members represent. It is true, as Lord Beaconsfield once remarked on a celebrated occasion, there is always present in London a small and active Jacobin element. It is also true that owing to the mistaken apathy of Conservatives they are too often allowed to walk over the course of parochial contests, but it is unquestionable that the apparent influence exercised by these extreme and clamorous politicans is ridiculously out of proportion, to their real strength in the Metropolis. Even the Radicalism of London, deeply tinged as it is with religious dissent, is I believe quite untainted with this Jacobism. I do not think that hon. Members opposite, though of course they know their own business best, will win London by proposals which, while they can have no other effect than that of raising the rates, already at the endurable maximum, are repugnant to the common sense of all men, and have been universally and unreservedly condemned by every statesman who has been responsible for the administration of the Poor Law in this country.

Motion made, and Question proposed, to leave out "now" from the Question, and insert "this day six months."

*MR. J. BLUNDELL MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich): I second the Motion for the rejection of the Bill. It contains most serious proposals, and if proper attention is given it, I do not think the House will agree to give it a Second Reading. It proposes to destroy the power of the Local Government Board so far as the administration of the Poor Law in 74 parishes within the Metropolitan area

is concerned, besides those within the City proper, and to hand over authority to the London County Council. For myself, I view it as a Radical change that must needs inflict on the ratepayers of the Metropolis some additional expense in the future. I dispute the statement that there is the great difference in the poor rate alleged. It will be found that out of 74 parishes there are 35 where the poor rate is 2s. 2d. in the £; between 2s. 2d. and 2s. there are 20; and under 2s. there are 19. The general rate averages 2s. in the £, and I cannot see that on this ground there is any necessity to destroy all the existing machinery and remove all responsibility from different localities for dealing with their own poor. Though I agree that the indoor poor of London should be paid for by nearly equal rates, yet it is even more desirable that the poor should be looked after in different districts by Boards of Guardians, also charged with the responsibility of expenditure. Is there likely to be a proper sense of responsibility on the part of Guardians if they spend from a common Metropolitan purse? Will they feel their sense of responsibility to the ratepayers who elect them? There are upon Board of Guardians men of kindly liberal natures whose disposition is to deal with the poor with a lavish hand, but extravagance is checked by a sense of responsibility to the ratepayers whose money they administer. Take for instance the parish in which I happen to be a large ratepayer—St. Pancras. We have to deal with a large amount of poverty, and the poor rate is 2s. in the £. If you were to allow the parish to draw its expenditure from a Common Fund in the proportion it now draws for its Poor Law burden—namely, a seventeenth part, St. Pancras might create any new office, say, for instance, appoint a clerk at £170 a year, and the only extent to which their ratepayers would suffer would be £10 out of the £170 a year. It is of the utmost importance to adhere to the principle that those who control the expenditure should be responsible to those who pay the rates. The Bill throughout bristles with unworkable propositions. It would transfer to the County Council work that, unless that Council were doubled in numbers, it would be incompetent to carry out. I do not agree with my hon. Friend, whose Motion I am seconding, or the disputed point in regard to the registration of voters; but I do recognize the fact, looking at the number of duties enumerated, that the new departments that would be created would require such a staff, that the London County Council would have to form new Committees, each with its officers, and I do not think the House or the country at large is prepared to admit that the new Council has yet shown itself qualified for the discharge of the important work of administration contemplated in the Bill. Expenditure would inevitably rise. Where the hon. Member for Bethnal Green anticipates an outlay of £1,000 it strikes me very strongly the ratepayers of London would discover the experiment had cost them more than ten times that amount. I do not see how proper control of expenditure is to be exercised without heavy additional expenses. We taxpayers of London are already heavily taxed. The amount of property in London now rated for Poor Law purposes is over 30 millions, and the taxes now collected amount to about £7,500,000. It is proposed to hand over to the County Council the management of the Boards of Guardians, and, speaking generally, the vestries, and who knows what further control may be grasped at. I notice standing next on the orders of the day to this Bill, another Bill dealing with the dwellings of the working classes which emanates from the same active section of hon. Members who so energetically support this Bill before us, and which is drawn on even worse lines than the measure we are now considering. But it is a Bill that shows they are perfectly prepared, willing, and anxious to destroy all the existing institutions of this vast Metropolis in order to hand over control to a body they think likely to coincide with their views, and this body is the County Council which at the present time fails to represent, in my opinion, the views of the Metropolis. I see among the names on the back of this Bill those of some Members of the County Council, and I suppose they have impressed their fellow Members on the Council with a great idea of their own importance and influence as wise legislators, but I fail to see anything in this Bill to justify such a claim, nor do I admit that the County

Council has now such confidence that we should entrust them with the power asked for. I trust a large majority of the House will vote with the majority of Metropolitan Members in putting a veto on the Bill.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): As one of the Members of that small syndicate to which the hon. Member for Peckham (Mr. Baumann) alluded, I may be allowed to say a few words in support of the Bill. I am sorry he should think this syndicate promoters such mischievous and dangerous legislators. He taunts us with not representing a majority of Metropolitan Members, but I am glad to think that though we do not as yet represent the majority of London constituencies, we are getting on towards it, and I am glad to see we have the support of the two new London Members who lately wrested their seats from the Conservative Party. I think before the hon. Member stigmatizes the Bill we have had the honour to introduce with harsh epithets, he should take the trouble to read it and understand it, which, so far as I can gather from his speech, he does not seem to have done. The hon. Member totally misunderstands the whole system under which the Common Metropolitan Poor Fund proposed to be extended under the Bill is at present administered, and the amounts received into and paid out of it, and the hon. Member for Dulwich (Mr. Maple) talked about our desire to supersede Boards of Guardians. We have no intention of the sort, and I think the hon. Gentleman must in his mind have confused our Bill with Bills that have been introduced from the other side. If he looks at our Bill he will find that we in no way interfere with the power of the Boards of Guardians, but instead of keeping them under the power of the Local Government Board, we propose to place them under the County Council. I should myself be in favour of thoroughly reforming the present Poor Law system in London, but except that we bring them into touch with the London County Council instead of the Local Government Boards the powers of the Guardians are not practically interfered with. The essence of the proposals we make is this, that we desire to see for Poor Law purposes throughout London one area, one assessment, greater uniformity of administration, and a uniform rate. Objects, all of which, with the exception of the question of assessment, can be secured by the extension of the Common Poor Fund. We have an entirely artificial division of districts for Poor Law purposes in London. We have 75 parishes divided from each other by imaginary lines, drawn, in many instances, without rhyme or reason, and yet because on one side of this line there happen to live more paupers than on the other side, ratepayers on the one side have to pay a larger rate than their neighbours on the other side. That seems to me a purely artificial state of things, not only absurd in itself, but grossly unjust, because, as my hon. Friend (Mr. Pickersgill) has pointed out, the heaviest poor rate falls on the poorest district, the richer district escaping with a lighter rate. It is no fault of the poorer parish that have a larger amount of poverty in their district, nor is it necessarily to the credit of the richer parish that they are relieved of poverty that may have existed in their midst. Day by day we find, unfortunately, the aggregation of poor in one quarter and of the wealthy in another quarter. This is a serious social evil, but irrespective of the social question, it is not right that by existing legislation we should aggravate such a state of things; yet we do so by taxing the poorer district more heavily than the rich. The evil is increased by the natural cause and effect of improvements in one part of the town, by improved means of locomotion, by increase of manufacturing industries, by the development of business, by various causes, some natural some artificial, some temporary some permanent, yet all leading to an inequality in which the poorer district bears the heavier burden and the richer district is to a large extent relieved of its share. The hon. Member for Peckham told us just now that there is very little inequality, because, according to the extraordinary calculation he made, the Common Poor Fund at this moment meets 77 per cent of the whole expenditure. Well, I think it is perfectly clear that the hon. Member has not examined the matter in the manner the House has a right to expect from a Member who moves the rejection of a Bill. If he will turn to the Local Government Report of last year, he will

find that, out of the whole charge of £920,000 under the Metropolitan Common Law Fund, the whole amount derived from the 5d. capitation grant was £245,000, not much more than a quarter of the whole, and therefore, when he talks of the additional 4d. bringing the Common Poor Fund almost to the point of equality, it is clear that he speaks without book, and his statement was misleading the House. I wish to urge very strongly, not only that it is of great importance from a social point of view and, as a matter of justice, that there should be equality between the poor rates of London, but I urge it, and I believe the President of the Local Government Board would be inclined to urge it also from that point of view, that it is a great tax upon our manufacturing industries. Through natural causes our manufacturing industries are principally situated in the East and South of London, and it is just these parts of London where there is the greatest influx of poorer population, where paupers are more numerous and the rates therefore high. In these days of keen competition, London manufacturers have the greatest difficulty in keeping pace with their rivals in the Northern and Midland counties, and anything that adds to the burden they ought fairly to bear must proportionately handicap them in commercial competition and do a great deal of harm to the wealth and industry of London. The hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. Burdett Coutts) the other day expressed an opinion that London ought to be a residential, not a manufacturing town, but it would be impossible for the working classes of London to exist without these great manufactures, and it was on this account as much as in the interest of consumers that we a week ago opposed the continuance of the coal tax; and I am strongly of opinion that this inequality of rates does an enormous amount of harm to London as a whole. I am glad to think that our proposal, the principle of a Common Poor Fund, and equality is practically admitted by the existence of the Fund itself, and my hon. Friend (Mr. Baumann) admits it, though he did not, because of his miscalculation, perceive the effect of his own argument, and I think we might claim his assent to half of our proposal. It seems to me the whole point of the discussion really turns upon the question whether we can extend this issue of grants to outdoor as well as indoor relief. I do not believe there will be any real danger in extending the system to outdoor relief, of course under proper regulations. The question of indoor relief I need hardly argue, for, as I understand my hon. Friend, he practically admits that. But I, for one, should think it very inexpedient indeed to carry out the system to the full extent in indoor relief, and not extend it at all to the principle of outdoor relief. There is a good deal of false sentiment talked on the question of indoor and outdoor relief, and under proper regulations there need not be the dangers some people have anticipated. I believe myself that under our present system outdoor relief is also needed, and certainly I would not, by excluding it from our proposal, give the enormous bribe, as it would be, to Guardians to diminish as far as they possibly could outdoor relief, and rely almost exclusively on indoor relief. I think it came out pretty clearly when we were discussing the Local Government Act that in the general opinion of the House it was a mistake to emphasize too strongly on the opinions of the Guardians, by means of their pockets, the advantages of indoor as compared with outdoor relief, and I believe that in the present state of public opinion, and if we obtain, as I believe we can, proper checks over the Guardians, there would be very little likelihood of any abuse of outdoor relief, and that it would be given only to a just and healthy extent. I would draw the attention of the hon. Member for Peckham to a return issued last year on the Motion of one of the hon. Members for Birmingham, from which it appears that in the whole of London where outdoor relief is given to something like 50,000 persons of both sexes and all ages only 803 adult able bodied men received relief who were not incapacitated by sickness, accident, or infirmity, and that I think shows that if carefully carried out there would be no abuse of the system, and under this Bill the checks would be stringent enough. The hon. Member for Dulwich (Mr. Maple) said we wished to supersede the Guardians, but he is quite mistaken, all

we propose is to secure greater uniformity in administration than there has been in the past. To this end the County Council would draw up certain bye-laws for the guidance of Guardians in their work of poor relief. The members of the Council for the particular district would be *ex officio* members of the Board of Guardians in that district. We should not get rid of the responsibility of the Guardians, but we should introduce a system of uniformity that would be of great advantage to Guardians. The hon. Member for Peckham says, further duties should not be thrown upon the County Council, but I am strongly of opinion that now we have got for the first time in London a really representative administrating body we should make the greatest possible use of it. I think the hon. Member for Bethnal Green would hardly have dared to make his present proposal if the whole of this extra control of the equalization carried to its full extent, was to be under the Local Government Board. It is only because we have this representative body to control this and other local matters together, that we think the time has come when we may without fear of abuse endeavour to bring about greater equality in the matter of the poor rate. Though the County Council is at this moment over full of work—new brooms sweep clean, and they have a great many matters to attend to—still I believe that my hon. Friend below the Gangway and other Members of the County Council will be willing to accept these additional duties, and will feel that to carry out the wishes of the ratepayers who have elected them, they should have some control over this matter of poor relief. There is one advantage they would have if this matter were under their control. They are directly interested both in economy and good administration, while, the Local Government Board necessarily looks at these things from a purely departmental point of view. It is nothing to them if the rates of London go up, and not of paramount importance if the Poor Law is not quite properly administered. I would endorse what fell from the hon. Gentleman the member for Bethnal Green in proposing the Bill. We do not say that the Measure is perfect in every detail, far from it, but we ask the Government to look at it with an open mind, and to allow it to be referred to a Select Committee, so that the matter may be thrashed out. We look to the President of the Local Government Board for sympathy, seeing how deeply the question affects the interests of London. I, as representing a poor constituency, may, perhaps, be somewhat prejudiced in regard to this matter, and I have no doubt that the hon. Member for Peckham representing, as he does, a rich constituency, is interested somewhat in the other direction. All we desire is that the matter should receive full and fair consideration, and should be thoroughly thrashed out by a competent Committee. We believe we can prove our case, and that what we are asking is a matter of justice and expediency.

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN (Lambeth, Brixton): As a ratepayer of London and as a representative of a certain number of ratepayers, I must enter a most emphatic protest against the Bill. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down accused my hon. Friend on this side of not knowing anything about the Bill, and of not understanding it. Well, I think my hon. Friend may fairly answer that little opportunity has been given to any of us to make any acquaintance with the measure. If I were to characterize the Bill by a name I should call it a "County Council Glorification Bill." The principle of the Bill according to the Memorandum which accompanies it, is very simple; it is to have all poor relief given from one common fund for the whole of the metropolis. The ostensible aim of the Bill is to avoid centralization as much as possible. But the Bill, it seems to me, really goes in for centralization pure and simple. It is argued that there will be a great safeguard in the County Council. But, though I do not wish to say anything offensive of the Council, I cannot help remarking that they will find ample work to occupy their time if they confine themselves to the duties at present imposed upon them. The question of the Poor Law was sufficiently discussed last year in the Committee on the Local Government Bill. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green says the Council has all the vigour and confidence of youth. Well, we have now had three months' experience of the Council, and its principal achievement seems to have been the raising of the rates.

Besides that, it has voted £2,000 a year to a Member of this House—and I have not a word to say against it, for no doubt the labourer is worthy of his hire—but there are some ratepayers who think their money might have been expended to greater advantage. The Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, which it petitioned in favour of, is another of the objects in which the Council has shown its vigour. Then it attempted to organize the outdoor *fête* of last Saturday, than which it is impossible to imagine a more dismal or dire fiasco. It is because I think the Council has already as much to do as it can get thorough without looking after the interests of the ratepayers, and because I have no confidence in the suggested safeguard, that I shall vote against the Bill.

MR. STANSFELD (Halifax): The hon. Member for Peckham (Mr. Baumann) is rather fond of strong and striking expressions, and, as I understood the hon. Member, one of his objections to the Bill is that it proposes to put the London County Council above the Guardians, and that the Council is now elected by the same suffrage as the Guardians. But I would remind the hon. Member that the House of Commons is chosen by the same suffrage as the County Council, and that before many years are over the franchise by which Boards of Guardians are elected will be altered by Parliament. The hon. Member also said that he regards this measure as a most mischievous and, in a bad sense, socialistic one. If he had said socialistic only, I should have made no objection, for there is high authority for the proposition that nowadays we are all socialists, but he said socialists in a bad sense. The hon. Member then went on to say that he was entirely in favour of the equalization of the Metropolitan poor rate as far as indoor relief was concerned. But he practically contended that we have gone as far as we ought to go in the measure of 1867. The hon. Member's prophesy is that if the rate is equalized it can only be done by levelling up, and at the cost of good administration. That is an intelligible argument, in answer to which I will endeavour to point out that it is impossible to carry out the principle of equalization without some sacrifice in favour of a good and strict administration of outdoor relief. The subject, however, I admit, is one worthy of discussion. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green has frankly said that he is willing to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, when the application of the principle involved can be carefully worked out. The noble Lord who has just spoken said that the County Council has already plenty to do. No doubt, that is so, but I have always found that it is precisely those who have plenty to do who find time to do something more. What they want is equalization of the rates, and if it is too soon to hand these powers over to the County Council, the supervision may be left in the mean time to the Local Government Board. I must say there is one statement of the hon. Member with which I am somewhat in accord. I do not think that the equalization of the whole London poor rate was implied by the legislation of 1867. As I read it, the view of that day was that it was advisable to make such a concession to the Metropolis, and that the richer part of the population should contribute something at least to the relief of the excessive strain on the poor districts, so far as it could be done without damage to the soundness of administration of the Poor Law. To my mind, therefore, this is an extension of that principle; and I approve of its being carried further. I would remind the hon. Member that many things have happened since 1867—one of the most recent, the creation of the County Council of London. What have you decreed by that legislative act? You have decreed the unity of London. After the legislation of last year, two things are morally certain. One, that London will itself demand this equalization, and demand it in all probability through the representatives that it sends to the County Council. Secondly, this House will not long resist that demand. You must admit the consequences of a principle in legislation. You have admitted the principle of the unity of London, and you may depend upon it that before long we shall have to go further, and discover a method by which we could consistently with sound administration place the burden equally upon the rich and poor districts, instead of leaving it to press as it does now most heavily upon those who have the greatest inability to pay. I have no hesitation in expressing

my concurrence in the views of my hon. Friends, and, therefore, I shall vote for the Second Reading in the hope that the Bill will be referred to a Select Committee, where the matter will be thrashed out. It is a subject deserving and requiring discussion. The rate ought to be equalized consistently with precautions which will secure good and economical administration. As to the methods, I should feel bound to make some reservations. I do not commit myself to everyone of those methods at the present moment, but I commit myself to this proposition, that I would endeavour to find a way of reconciling the equalization of the poor rate, which I hold to be inevitable, with the necessities of economical administration. As to the methods, it would be perfectly out of the question to throw upon the County Council, either directly or indirectly, the whole responsibility of the management of the poor rate of the Metropolis. If it were to do so, it would necessarily play into the hands of the permanent officials. It is quite impossible for a body like the London County Council to undertake the ordinary duties of Boards of Guardians for the whole of this Metropolis. You must keep them, therefore—and the Bill proposes to keep them—with the Boards of Guardians. You cannot get men to do public work without you allow them some latitude of judgment, and the framers of the Bill have had that in their mind, because they propose that each Board of Guardians shall present a Budget to the County Council, and that it shall not be entitled to a share of the metropolitan rate unless it justifies its expenditure in the Budget it produces. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman is prepared to go so far, but to my mind it appears inevitable. I think that sooner rather than later we shall be compelled to accept the equalization of the metropolitan poor rate, and, if that be so, I think it cannot be denied that it is highly desirable that the Select Committee should endeavour to ascertain, if possible, how to realize that proportion consistently with the necessities of good administration. You might grant to the County Council certain fixed annual sums to be transmitted to the Boards of Guardians, the sums transmitted to be based upon their expenditure and with due regard to the economy of their administration. The County Council might grant the sum on the Budget Estimate of the Board of Guardians, and according to their own view of what the expenditure had been in the past, and that it ought not to be lavishly or unnecessarily increased. On that basis, the Guardians would have an interest in keeping within the amount estimated; and it would enable them to spend in one direction and effect a saving in another, as might be thought advisable. I should be very desirous that there should be some elasticity in the matter—some freedom and discretion, some judgment left to the Guardians of each Union, because, firstly, we want the best men to do the work, and secondly, because the work would be better done if, within certain limits, a feeling of responsibility were inspired. These are the reasons why I certainly shall vote for the Second Reading of the Bill, in the hope that it may be sent to a Select Committee; and I trust the right hon. Gentleman who is responsible for the action of the Government in this matter will say that there is something not unreasonable in those views.

*MR. B. HOARE (Hampstead): Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak with the utmost possible respect of the London County Council, but I am bound to say that it suggests to me the idea of a young giant out for a lark, and if there is any unfortunate head in the way of the club he flourishes, so much the worse for the head. This Bill proposes to do away with several institutions. The Metropolitan Asylums Board is to have its head smashed and to be well jumped upon and extinguished. That Board has done and is doing a great deal of good work, and is doing it economically as I well know in one instance of my own personal knowledge. The unfortunate ratepayers are to be injured in their tenderest part—the pocket. That is always their fate, and it is one to which they are bound for the next three years, and possibly thereafter. New burdens are to be imposed on the ratepayers of London, that will not be placed upon other parts of the country. The Boards of Guardians are to be treated with scant courtesy. They are to be kindly preserved, but preserved with very limited authority. They are to be placed entirely under the control of the County Council. The

workhouses are to be taken out of their control, and may be used by the County Council for particular classes of paupers. While Guardians from any part of the Metropolis will have the right to visit and inspect. The local members of the County Council are to be *ex-officio* members of the Boards of Guardians, and they will be very formidable and powerful members of those Boards. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax said the time must come when these Boards would be placed on a popular franchise. It strikes me the right hon. Gentleman has forgotten the difference between Boards of Guardians and other elective bodies. Boards of Guardians are elected for one purpose, the relief of the poor. What would be the effect of placing them under a body elected on a popular franchise? It would be this—that that large class which does not contribute any appreciable amount to the rates, but which does receive, almost exclusively, relief from the rates, would have the control of the fund contributed by those who pay largely and who do not receive anything from the rates. This seems to me entirely to upset all the principles of popular representation and of taxation, according to representation. The people who receive the money in actual doles and house room and food, will find it to their interest that the relief should be freely and generously given. It is not to the interest of the ratepaying community that the relief should be largely given, but that there should be a proper limit, under a judicious system of safeguards, to the administration both of outdoor and indoor relief; but under the system now proposed, by which the control now exercised by the Guardians over the poors rate will be practically given to the popularly-elected Council, you will be making it the direct interest of the poor man who may come on the rates, to advocate extravagance in their distribution. This seems to me to be a strong argument against the principle of the Bill. The question of raising a poor rate from the richer parishes, partly in aid of the poorer ones, has already been conceded, and the principle is actually in force now, and, for my part, I see no reason why that principle should not be extended; but I certainly do see strong reasons why this Bill should not be accepted by the House. It seems to me that the House would do well and act wisely in rejecting this measure, and in leaving the County Council to settle a little more into its regular work before imposing on it the largely extended functions imposed by the Bill.

Mr. B. Hoare

*Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green): Mr. Speaker, I think it is a good thing that we have had this debate on the Bill before the House, if it be only that it has enabled us to get the opinions of hon. Gentlemen opposite with regard to the County Council, called into existence by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie). The London County Council will now know how to value those opinions, and I feel that what has been said by the hon. Member for Peckham (Mr. Baumann) will possibly have a very large effect at the next General Election as regards the position of the London Members of this House. At the same time, I am bound to say I feel exceedingly sorry that what is certainly one of the greatest public institutions that have been created of late years by means of the popular vote, should have been thus sneered at within a couple of months of its actual creation by those who created it. That body has only been two months at work. It took over a large amount of labour from other bodies, it had placed on its shoulders a great amount of responsibility, and it has scarcely had time to look round and see the great things that have to be done from a purely administrative point of view; but because it has not been able to settle everything in accordance with the views of hon. Members opposite, they get up in that House and sneer at it. As far as I am concerned, I am so well satisfied with the work done by the County Council, that I have no objection to the extension of its powers, even to the extent demanded by the Bill now before the House. I think that already the County Council have shown that they comprehend the enormous work which devolves upon them, and I feel tolerably certain that they possess abilities and qualifications which will enable them satisfactorily to carry out the duties they are called upon to perform. Of course they may not be up to the high standard of the hon. Mem-

ber for Peckham, neither with regard to general ability nor in point of common sense; yet I think it will be found that they will give general satisfaction to the constituencies in the Metropolis who have recently elected them. Those of us whose names are on the back of the Bill are not disposed to contend for all the details of the measure. What we more particularly want is that the main principle of the Bill—the equalization of the poors rate—should be carried by this House, and that the measure should then be remitted to a Select Committee. I have often been struck in this House by the kind of parade of generosity and sympathy which has been made by hon. Gentlemen opposite towards the poor of London. Well, here is an opportunity for them to show that sympathy in a practical way; but the moment the opportunity comes we see how shallow and hollow all those professions of sympathy really are. Now, what is it that is absolutely asked by this Bill? It is simply, so far as the rating to the pound for the support of the poor of London is concerned, that this great Metropolis—made one by the action of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, in the Act of last year—shall be treated in the same manner as Leeds and Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham, and other great centres of industry, and that the poors rate shall be equalized over the entire area. Suppose the Government consent to the Second Reading of this very small measure to-day—and a small measure I contend it is—what will happen? Hon. Members opposite laugh, but I will presently tell them a fact they seem to have forgotten. Supposing the Government consent to the rating in the pound being equalized all over London, will that have equalized the rating over the Metropolis? By no means, for we find that not only are the poorer localities rated higher in the pound than the richer ones, but they are more highly assessed in proportion to the value of the houses rated. Every poor locality in London is assessed up to the hilt, whereas in the richer localities the occupiers not only pay less in the pound, but the assessment is proportionately less. As far as I am concerned, I only wish we were discussing a broader measure of equalization, which would not only make the rates equal over the whole of London, but would appoint some central authority which could equalize the assessments also. However, the measure now before the House is restricted to the question of the poors rate. Allusion has already been made to the fact that already great areas in this Metropolis have been altered, and the poor inhabitant driven out. Hon. Members may remember that a good many years ago there were large areas within the City of London itself that were cleared of the poor population, and no accommodation was found for them either within the area or near the area so cleared; although some time afterwards a small block of buildings was erected by the City of London Corporation in which a comparatively few families were placed; but beyond this no provision was made for housing the great mass of the poor, who were driven out of those rookeries—for rookeries they deserved to be called—and who found their way into still poorer districts, the inhabitants of which were compelled to maintain those who were forced into their midst by the clearances thus effected. And beyond this, the improvement schemes carried out in London by the Metropolitan Board of Works have had the effect of driving the poor from localities where the rating was comparatively light, into other localities where the rating was very high; and hence it is that year after year the poor have had a larger burden to bear, and are becoming less and less able to bear it. I do not see in the House the hon. Member who represents the constituency in which I live, or I should have liked to have heard him speak in the name of Hammersmith. My hon. Friend near me has spoken of Bethnal Green, but that is not the only locality where the poor are heavily taxed. Surely, Sir, it is not asking too much when we ask that people should be taxed or rated according to their means—for that is all which is asked by this Bill—and that the wealthier localities which have the benefit of all these metropolitan improvements should, at any rate, be called upon to contribute according to their ratable value and assessment. Some constituencies are very much overrated as compared with others, and the hon. Member appears to be afraid that this equalization scheme would have the effect of transferring some of the burdens

from the poorer to the richer districts. But supposing this levelling up did take place, even then it would be a mere matter of justice, and we believe that the result would be that the enormous rate in some of the poorer districts would be lessened. I do not propose now to go into the difficult question of outdoor and indoor relief, but I should like to say, in passing, that I think that with a wise and judicious system of management the outdoor relief system might be extended so that a man temporarily in difficulties should not be compelled to break up his home and go into the workhouse. Tens of thousands of instances occur in which a little temporary relief would enable a person to tide over his difficulties, arising perhaps from a bad winter, sickness, or a slackness of trade, and surely he should not be compelled under such circumstances to break up his home, and thereby become stamped as a pauper. I am sorry that the Local Government Board and the local authorities appear to be trying to stamp out the system of outdoor relief. We know that enormous sacrifices are made by poor people to keep a roof over their heads and to save their homes from being broken up. In past times the administration of the Poor Law was such that the poor dreaded going into the workhouse, not merely out of self-respect, but on account of the hardships they there suffered Men have often preferred a prison to the workhouse, because there they may be better treated. But recent times and under popular control there has been a great and beneficial change in this respect. We believe in popular control and in the principle of popular representation, and hence we support this Bill. I hope that the President of the Local Government Board will take this matter up, and as we supported him last Session when he was dealing with Local Government generally so we will support him in this. We believe that the time is rapidly arriving when the whole question of the rating of the Metropolis will have to be dealt with, and I should be glad to see the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board put his shoulder to the wheel, take the matter up and complete the work he commenced last year.

*Mr. C. J. DARLING (Deptford): We have been told by the hon. Member for Poplar that the vital principle of this Bill is the taking away of certain powers from the Local Government Board and the bestowing of them upon the County Council. If that is so I shall feel compelled to vote against the Bill. But, on the other hand, the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Halifax, who, perhaps, speaks with greater authority, represented that the main principle of the Bill was the equalization of the poor rate throughout the Metropolis. Now I am in favour of that principle and, limiting my support of the Bill to that principle, I shall vote for the Second Reading. I shall vote for the principle of the Bill as I gather it from the memorandum attached to the measure, for I agree it is the common interest of the ratepayers of the Metropolis that the cost of poor relief should be defrayed by a rate levied equally over the entire Metropolis. This debate will enable hon. Members on this side of the House to show how unjust are the attacks which have been levelled against them by hon. Members opposite, and it will also prove us quite as fully to sympathize with the poor as do hon. Members themselves. Now I have for a long time been in favour of an equal rate all over the Metropolis for the maintenance of the poor of London for I do think it is unfair that persons, by living in a certain district, by betaking themselves to the West End, should escape more lightly than others from the burden of supporting the poor of London. I trust that the course I am about to take will show hon. Members opposite that there are those who sit on the Conservative benches who are quite as anxious as others in any part of the House to act fairly by the people generally. But with regard to that part of the Bill which proposes to give certain powers to the London County Council, I reserve to myself perfect liberty to vote against it. It is said that this body though young is vigorous, but youth has other characteristics besides vigour—youth sometimes does not know how to take care of its money. It is fair to admit that the London County Council has shown its appreciation of one of the duties which the Poor Law enforces—namely, the duty of the child to support its parent—by performing an act of filial piety to one who is regarded

as its putative father. But a body whose only two notorious acts so far consisted of this and of a triumph of organization in regard to a Fire Brigade parade cannot be said to have yet earned public confidence, and I will be no party to increasing its powers. On the other hand, inasmuch as they have not yet had time to "turn round," as the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) says, I do not think we ought to put on them all the new duties which are proposed to be imposed on them by this Bill. I think we should be acting no friendly part to them in doing so, and I will be no party to such a course. Still, I think there ought to be, and I hope there soon will be, an equalization of the poor rates of this Metropolis, and I shall therefore vote for this Bill, although, as a matter of fact, I approve of only one of its clauses, that is Clause 4.

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): No doubt a good deal may be said for the equalization of rates, considered from a popular platform, and it is of course a very easy thing for hon. Members to say it is a great shame for a rich district in the West End to pay lower rates than a poor district in the East End. I, for one, do oppose and object to any system under which the poorer districts are required to pay more than the richer districts. But those who have taken the trouble to study the facts of the case find that it by no means follows from the present system that the poorer parishes pay more than the wealthier ones. A Return which has been presented to Parliament this very year shows that some of the very poor districts of London are really rated below the average amount of the rate for the poor. The average amount of the rates in London is about 4s. 11d. in the £.

*MR. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): Oh, no; that is the general rate.

*MR. BARTLEY: The general rate, which includes the poor rate and other rates, is about 4s. 11d. When you are talking of the rates in the different districts, you must deal with the whole thing as it stands. Now, if we look at the various parishes, we find that some of the very poor districts are rated below 4s. 11d. Shoreditch and Camberwell are both rated at 4s. 11d. But there are a great number of parishes which are poor in every sense of the word, and which are rated below this amount. St. Pancras, which no one can say is a rich parish, comes within this category, and the Ratcliffe Division of Limehouse is rated at 4s. 10d., while Islington, my own constituency, one of the poorest parts of London, is rated at 4s. 1½d. The fact is, that the difference in the amount of the rates does not entirely depend on the question of poverty or riches, and it is therefore necessary to consider what other questions creep in in connection with the subject. When we talk of equalizing the rates throughout the whole of London we are likely to place ourselves in a considerable amount of difficulty by largely diminishing the efficiency with which the work of administration is at present carried on. I attribute to a great extent the differences in the rates to the different ways in which the localities look after their districts. I do not want to say too much about my own district, but I am sure there is no parish in London which is so well looked after in this matter as the parish of Islington. Though it has so large a number of poor, the rates are nearly as low as those of the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square. If you put an end to the present system, and substitute for it one under which the whole of the cost of poor relief is drawn from a Common Fund, the tendency will be that everybody, instead of trying to do the work as economically as possible, will be anxious to get as much as they can out of the Common Fund, and I am sure the consequence will be an enormous increase in the rates all round. All those who have served on Board of Guardians must have noticed in what a different manner the question of increasing a local rate is treated from a question of drawing money from the Imperial Exchequer. In the one case the greatest pains are taken to cut down expenses as much as possible, whilst in the other the only notion seems to be to obtain as much as can be got from the Imperial Exchequer. The same tendency would be observed if we had a Common Fund for the whole of London, and I therefore object entirely to the proposal. I should like to say a word with reference to the principle of the Bill. It is very easy for my hon.

Friend behind me to say he will vote for the measure because of a sentence in the Memorandum which appears on the face of the Bill, which Memorandum would never become law, even if the Bill did. The measure not only deals with the equalization of the poor rate, but it goes into the question of indoor and outdoor relief. I do not think this is the time to discuss the question raised by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Pickersgill) as to the way in which relief is administered, but I may say that I believe distinctly that the system which has grown up during the last twenty years has done infinitely more benefit to the poor than to the ratepayers, and has conduced far more to the well-being of the people than to the reduction of the rates. Section 12 of this Bill gives power to the London County Council to distribute the indoor poor over the whole Metropolis. Well, Sir, those of us who have sat on Boards of Guardians know perfectly well that if we were to give such a fifth wheel to the coach, the whole machinery of Poor Law administration would break down. You must either let the Guardians administer the Poor Law pure and simple or hand it over to some other body. You cannot have two bodies both doing it at the same time. I do not understand how, by any possible means, a system can work by which the question of the indoor poor is to be regulated partly by the Guardians and partly by an independent body by which the Guardians are to be superintended. The County Council would, under the Bill, really override the whole work of the Guardians. such a system could not possibly be carried out. Is it reasonable that we should do away with the functions of the Guardians, and hand over the delicate machinery for administering outdoor relief to an independent body which has no special knowledge of the subject or machinery for acquiring that knowledge? One of the provisions of the Bill is that the County Council shall appoint and remunerate such officers as they think fit for carrying out their proposed new powers of looking after the Guardians and seeing that they obey their directions. I think that an amount of political clap-trap has been put into this Bill. It is certainly political clap-trap to go about London and advocate that the poor should be relieved of some of their rates. This is not the way of doing it. Some of the poorer districts would certainly resent a re-arrangement of this kind, as they pay less at pressnt than they would under the re-arrangement. If we are going to re-arrange the rates, let us do so in a proper manner, and do not let us interfere recklessly with our present system of relief. During the last 20 years the work of the Boards of Guardians in London has been immensely improved. Some of the Guardians have been the pioneers of improvement in regard to the whole machinery of outdoor and indoor relief to the immense benefit of the poor themselves, and I think the House ought to hesitate before consenting to take the work out of their hands.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: The hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley), who charges us on this side of the House with political clap-trap, was very careful not to deal with the subject which is before the House, except in the few remarks he made about the machinery of the Bill. If he had studied the Return of the assessment of the Metropolis to the poor rate, he would have found that the question of a general rate is a distinctly different thing from the question of what is paid by each individual parish in connection with the Poor Law rate. We are not advocating to-day the equalization of the general rates of the Metropolis, and therefore the remarks of the hon. Member were really beside the question. Not one of the Gentlemen who have spoken on the opposite side of the House has really attempted to grapple with the question. It has been pointed out that various Governments have done their best to deal with London as a whole, and that 43 per cent of the cost of the poor now comes out of the Common Poor Fund. The hon. Member for Peckham (Mr. Baumann) tried to make out that 73 per cent was already paid out of that fund, but that is not the case. If it were the case, I do not see why he should so strongly object to the system being carried a little further. To put it mildly, we have 50 per cent paid out of the Common Fund. Now, we say, here is an opportunity of placing the whole of London on a common footing in

this respect, and because we advocate the carrying of the present system to its logical conclusion, we are accused of being guilty of political clap-trap. If this Bill passed, I admit that the Metropolitan Asylums Board would be swept out of existence, but that is a body which is elected and constituted on the very worst principles. We do not object to transferring the powers of the Metropolitan Asylums Board to a directly representative body like the London County Council. During the passing of the clauses of the Local Government Act, the President of the Local Government Board did not at all discountenance the idea that before long it would be necessary to hand over the function of the Metropolitan Asylums Board to the County Council. It seems to me that hon. Members opposite are only annoyed with one thing with regard to the County Council, and that is, its political complexion is not the same as that of most of the London representatives of this House. We on this side maintain that the people of London under a popular suffrage have a right to elect what Local Authorities they like, and even if the views of the London Council were not in accordance with our own, we should still assert that that right remained inherent in the people of London, and we should respect and not sneer at the body they elect. The hon. Member for North Islington referred to the rates in some parishes with large suburban population. Let him, however, take the parishes just adjacent to the City of London, and he will find that in St. Andrew's, Holborn, the poor rate is 3s. in the £, in St. Luke's it is 2s. 10d, and in Clerkenwell it is 2s. 9d. or 2s. 10d. The reason why it is so high is that the poor population residing in the City has been driven over the borders. Whilst we are paying our 3s. in the £, the people in the City, whose poor we are supporting, are paying 1s., or, putting all extras on, about 1s. 6d. in the £. We do not say that the machinery proposed in this Bill is necessarily perfect. If the House is prepared to concede our principle that the equalization of the poor rates over the whole of the Metropolis is just, it can perhaps devise some better machinery for carrying it out. Unfortunately, the only thing hon. Gentlemen opposite have done is to sneer at the principle as socialistic. The hon. Member for Peckham said he hoped the people would see what we were at. We hope the people will see what we are at. We are endeavouring to grapple with some of the social problems of this great Metropolis, and we rather like the sneers of hon. Members opposite than otherwise. I do not think they will find their sneers very satisfactory to the suffering ratepayers outside, who will rather honour those who attempt to grapple with the great and trying difficulties which surround the question. Hon. Members opposite have not attempted to point out any better machinery. I do not see the force of the point put by the hon. Member for Peckham. Is it not a fact that in some of the very poorest parishes the cost of outdoor relief is brought down lower than in parishes which are in a much better social condition? Therefore, the argument that you will have this indiscriminate giving away of money entirely fails, in view of what is being done in the poor parishes in the East End of London. If we desired to institute a Common Fund for the first time, you might have a strong case against us; but when it has already been adopted, and when the whole tendency of the action of successive Governments has been in that direction, why should we stand still now and say we will go no further? I am fully convinced of one thing. This question has to be grappled with, and it will be settled on the basis we indicate. Whether the machinery we recommend is a machinery that will eventually be adopted remains to be seen. We think it would be the best machinery, although we are not wedded to it. But we are determined of one thing—that whatever the machinery may be, what we shall struggle for, is that it shall be controlled by a representative body, directly elected by the people. If we lose in the Division this afternoon, we are confident that the question will grow, and that before many years it will be satisfactorily settled.

MR. COWLEY LAMBERT (Islington, E.): The hon. Gentleman has made reference to certain parishes in the Metropolis where the poor rate is high. He might have mentioned other parishes—such as Christchurch, Whitechapel, where the poor rate is 2s. 2d. in

the £; the Minories, where it is 2s. 2d.; St. Giles's, where it is 2s. 1d.; St. Mary's, Whitechapel, where it is 2s.; and St. Mary's, Islington—one Division of which I have the honour to represent—where it is 1s. 8d. Under such circumstances, hon. Members may realize the objection we have to this scheme for the equalization of the rates. It is evident that if this equalization takes place, it will make a difference of 6d. in the £ to all the inhabitants of one of the poorest parishes in the North of London. The hon. Gentleman has said that while we are anxious that the machinery proposed by the Bill should not take the place of the Boards of Guardians, we have not suggested any other machinery. We have not done so for the simple reason that we do not think any other machinery is necessary. We are content that the Poor Law should be administered as at present. Both the hon. Member for Finsbury and the hon. Member for Bethnal Green have delivered eulogiums upon the London County Council, and they have both reproached us with sneering at that body. We have not sneered at that body. We are only anxious that—precocious child as it is—it should learn to walk before it learns to run. We think that the speech of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green is about the strongest argument against the Bill that could possibly be advanced. The hon. Gentleman dwelt upon the heavy responsibility which the London County Council have undertaken and upon the amount of work they have to do, and he added that if they had enough to do they were full of energy and youth—he did not say recklessness, as he might have done—and if the number was not sufficient it might be doubled, a statement which I think will be received with great astonishment by the ratepayers throughout the Metropolis. This body, which is so full of energy and youth, in its recklessness wants to have, further, the Poor Law administration of no less than seventy-four parishes in London. I certainly think this experiment is a very dangerous one to try. I object to the Bill on three grounds, all of them fair and practical. I object to it in the first place because it has been sprung upon us in a very unfair manner. I object to it in the second place because it is impracticable and unworkable, and in the third place I object to it because its adoption would raise the rates in my constituency—a constituency consisting of the lower, middle, and working classes—at least 6d. in the £.

*Mr. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington): I beg, in the first place, to make an earnest protest against the way in which legislation is attempted by those who have been termed a syndicate. Hon. Members introduced the Bill on February 28, said nothing about it till two days before the Second Reading, printed and circulated it the day before yesterday, and then, by some arrangement with political friends, secured for it a place which nobody ever thought it would occupy. The supporters of the Bill then, in order to obtain the adhesion of the Members on this side, said it contained a principle, and if the House accepted the principle they did not care what became of the machinery. The hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. J. Rowlands) has, however, let the cat out of the bag. In truth, the real object of the Bill is to put powers, which this House refused last year to give them, into the hands of the London County Council, and it has little or nothing to do with the equalization of rating or the benefitting of the poor. The only benefit the poor of London will get from the Bill will be that paupers will be sent from a workhouse near their people to one, seven, or eight miles away if it happen to be empty. It has been admitted by hon. Gentlemen opposite that the time of the London County Council, is fully occupied, and it was suggested by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green that possibly the Council might be strengthened by an addition to its numbers—a good proposal, if possible, but it is impossible to obtain an addition of equal merit to the present Members, for none but themselves could be their parallel. It may be that on the principle that in the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom, the County Council should take power to add to their number as soon as possible. A few days ago I supported a Bill brought in by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green on the ground that the County Council had expressed a view in favour of it, and that we ought not, on the first occasion when it

was expressed, to refuse to pay attention to the wish of that representative body; it will not, therefore, be supposed that I wish to deprecate the importance of the Council, or that I think that ultimately increased powers may not be given to it. We felt all through the passing of the Local Government Act that the powers we were conferring on the Council were but a commencement, and I believe in my heart that ultimately these powers will have to be greatly extended. But the Council has only had a three months' existence, and is already full of work. That is admitted by the hon. Member for North-East Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) who says that on the ground of the various duties it has to perform its little eccentricities ought to be pardoned, but I say we shall be running counter to the intention expressed when we passed the Local Government Act if we transfer the administration of the Poor Law from the Guardians to the London County Council, for this is what is really proposed. In the first place, all the duties and control which the Poor Law Board have in connection with workhouses and the Common Fund are to be transferred to the London County Council; they take the power first, and then they take the money. Not only do the Council get the Common Fund, but they secure to themselves all the visible property of the Boards of Guardians and local bodies, and the Bill will leave to Boards of Guardians the power to manage workhouses, dispensaries, and district schools, and so on, in places that are the property of somebody else. It is not to be supposed that those who own the property and possess the money by which the property is kept up will have the real control over the Guardians themselves. It is to get control over the Guardians that the Bill is brought forward; it has nothing whatever to do with the equalization of rates. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Deptford will be one of the most innocent-minded men in his profession if he allows himself to be persuaded to go into the Lobby with hon. Gentlemen opposite.

*SIR W. PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.): The emotional eloquence of the hon. Gentleman has somewhat led us away from a subject that requires calm consideration. The hon. Gentleman tells us that the statement in the Memorandum is altogether opposed to what is put forward in the Bill; but that I utterly deny, and if the hon. Gentleman has read the 4th Clause I cannot understand how he should overlook the fact that the wording of the Memorandum is almost identical with that clause. But I only detain the House for a few moments to refer to remarks from both the hon. Members for Islington. They seem to think, and I can quite understand why they should feel distrust of a measure they fear will bring about such a result, that the rates in Islington will be raised to a point they are not reaching at the present moment. They drew a comparison between the rates in St. George's and St. Giles', where it is 2s. in the £, and St. Mary's, Islington, where it is 1s. 8d., and the hon. Members seemed to refer to the lower rate in Islington as commending itself to notice as showing the economical way in which the authorities worked the Poor Law system in that district. But if we take a careful survey of all the circumstances we shall find that there really is less economy in St. Mary's than in St. George's, and St. Giles'. In the latter the proportion of paupers per thousand of population is 37, in St. Mary's it is 22, and the ratable value of St. Mary's is four times that of St. Giles' and St. George's. So that taking into account the difference in the proportion of poverty, and the difference in ratable value, St. Giles' and St. George's have done the better economical work, and such instances as these support the claim for an equalization of rates throughout London.

*MR. LAFONE (Southwark, Bermondsey): The Bill deals with a subject in which I take great interest, and I will not give a silent vote on this occasion. When the Local Government Act was passed last Session the control of poor relief was expressly reserved from County Councils, because it was considered that those Councils would

have quite enough on their hands until they got into harness. The Bill we are now asked to read a second time is an attempt by a side wind to abrogate the deliberate decision of last Session and confer upon the London County Council powers now exercised by the Local Government Board. As one who for many years has been Chairman of a Board of Guardians for a large metropolitan union, I may claim to speak with some authority, and I say there is the greatest objection to *ex officio* members of Boards of Guardians such as the Bill proposes. *Ex officio* members we now have are not looked on with favour by the elected Guardians, and still less would they be regarded with favour as coming from the County Council, because from the divided nature of their duties they would be unable to carry out efficient control. There is generally a weekly or fortnightly meeting of the whole Board of Guardians, but the practical work of the Guardians is not done at those meetings; the talking is done there, but the efficient work is done in Committees. But these *ex officio* Guardians would not be able to attend the meetings of the Relief Committees where the work is done and where extravagance may develop. If a Common Fund were established and supported by a general poor rate over the whole of London, the effect would be that in the poorer districts where the Guardians are elected from the classes of shopkeepers and small property holders there would be a less rigid supervision over the funds committed to their administration. I know from experience that until those who are largely rated for the maintenance of their own poor, take upon themselves the charge of becoming Guardians there is a disposition towards lavish expenditure. And so it will be in the future if you confer the powers proposed in this Bill on the London County Council, and leave such a small remnant of authority to Guardians that it will not be worth the while of men of leisure and position becoming members of Boards of Guardians. Another question the Bill raises is the transfer of paupers from one district to another. By such a transfer the Guardians would lose all control over the paupers under their charge. The new Board would know nothing of the circumstances and surroundings, and would be quite unable to say if any particular person remained a proper recipient of relief. Moreover, the transfer would be a hardship both to the paupers and their friends. In the regulations for our own workhouses, we have stated times for visitors—once a week in the workhouse, twice a week in the infirmary; but if you transfer paupers to a distant part of the Metropolis, you may make it almost impossible for their friends to visit them. This is comparatively a small point; but my objection goes to the whole principle of the Bill; it is out of time and out of place. We want to deal with a question of this kind largely—with one measure for the whole country. It is too large a subject to be dealt with in a small Bill introduced by a private Member. I am heartily in favour of uniform rating over the whole Metropolitan area, but I can in no sense accept the impractical proposals in this Bill. Something towards equalization is accomplished by the grant from the Common Fund. To this fund poor districts, where there are large numbers of paupers in receipt of indoor relief, pay considerable amounts; but, on the other hand, they receive back again some thousands a year more than they pay in, and in this way the rates are reduced considerably. It should not be forgotten also that as rates are reduced there is a tendency for rents to rise, so that equalization of rates would not necessarily be advantageous to householders. But, as I have said, the question is too large for a Bill of this character. I am sure the Government have not lost sight of the question. I heartily approve of the general principle of equalization; but it is far too large a subject for the County Council, before it has tried its powers and shown its capabilities, to take in hand, and I see no corresponding advantage in making the transfer of power from the Local Government Board. In my judgment, the

Bill is in a crude, unworkable form, and I must vote against it.

*SIR W. GUYER HUNTER (Hackney, Central): If I thought the Bill was intended to equalize rates, and would have that result, I should be one of the first to support it, and in doing that I should be carrying out the behests of my constituents. But I know full well that under the specious guise of equalizing the poor rate, the Bill is nothing more or less than an attempt by the London County Council to grasp at power. It tends simply to centralize all authority in the Council, and before long we should have Boards of Guardians and even the Local Government Board, perhaps, swept away. I think the County Council might wait a few months longer and first gain the confidence of the people of the Metropolis before attempting such a large measure of reform as this. I also wish to add my protest against the way in which this Bill has been introduced. Until late last evening I had not the shadow of a suspicion that this Bill was to be brought forward to-day. Had hon. Members below the Gangway explained their intention of bringing it on a few days previously, possibly a little consultation with us might have led to modifications in the Bill in many particulars, and they might have gained assent to the principle of equalization of the rate in the Metropolis. I trust now the Bill will be thrown out as it deserves to be, for it is nothing more or less than a grasp at power by the London County Council.

MR. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey): I am opposed to the Bill because it seems to me it strikes at the principle, so important in local matters to maintain, that local taxation should accompany local administration. With the powers of local taxation you should have local knowledge. If you allow Guardians to draw from a Common Fund instead of restricting them, as now they are restricted, to the fund that is provided by their own locality, and in relation to which they have full knowledge, then all security for wise administration will disappear. The area within which Guardians now act is sufficiently limited for them to have that detailed acquaintance with the condition of the poor which is absolutely essential for sound administration. The Bill raises a fallacious idea of security where no real security would exist. A control must be useless if it is an ignorant control, and surely it can easily be shown that in matters of poor relief the control of the London County Council must be an ignorant control. The knowledge that can make poor relief really effectual without abuse is only to be attained by those who devote themselves to the work with a familiarity with the surrounding local circumstances; and having regard to the enormous duties that fall upon the London County Council, I think it would be imprudent to allow them to gratify their ambition to gain the power of controlling the Poor Law system. It would really come to this. The County Council would know nothing whatever about poor relief, and so would have to do what our ancestors were always averse to doing; they would provide an army of officials to manage the business, and in that way you would have official management without responsibility. These officials would have the knowledge without the responsibility, and you would have the County Council an unwieldy body, having control which would not be a real control, because they would not have any real knowledge. To draw an illustration from my own parish, I may say that we have a most efficient system of supervision over outdoor relief by means of a voluntary committee, and by means of 16 visitors we have been able to almost extinguish this form of pauperism by applying to each case exactly that evidence best fitted to deal with it. These parishioners have gone into the work with zeal and knowledge of the circumstances in relation to each case, and have been able largely to relieve the parish from the disgrace of pauperism; but these advantages will disappear if a large unwieldy body like the Council exercise control,

relying as they must upon their irresponsible officials.

*Mr. GAINSFORD BRUCE (Finsbury, Holborn): I regret that the House should be engaged in the discussion of the Second Reading of a measure which has been in the hands of Members little more than 24 hours. So far as I can understand its provisions, it seems to me it is not a Bill the principle of which is the equalization of the Metropolitan poor rate, but a Bill for the extension of the authority of the London County Council. When we speak of equalization of the poor rate, and extension of the rating area, we are probably all agreed that the extension should be as far as is consistent with ecomomical administration. Now, to many of us on this side of the House, and perhaps to some on the other side, it is somewhat surprising to be told that the control of the London County Council is likely to secure economy. The London County Council has not earned a reputation for economy, and we cannot believe that the Council is the body likely to promote that economy of administration which is all-important in matters of this kind. Nor can I approve the proposed method of administration. It is not quite correct to say that the Bill places Boards of Guardians under the County Counil, it places the County Council between the Guardians and the Local Government Board, because first there is an appeal from the Guardians to the London County Council, and then as the framers of the Bill cannot trust the Council there is an appeal from the Council to the Local Government Board. I venture to assert there could hardly be a more clumsy method of administration than this triple system of divided authority. We all agree, I suppose, with what was said by the right hon. Gentleman on the First Opposition Bench that you cannot get men to voluntarily take upon themselves responsible duties unless you trust their judgment and discretion, and there, I think, you have a strong argument against the Bill. It will not be possible to get good men to serve as Guardians if they are to be the mere puppets of the County Council. There is nothing we have more reason to be proud of than the willingness of persons of leisure and position to serve on Boards of Guardians in London. It would be a retrograde step to place one administrative representative body under the control of another representative body with an appeal to the Local Government Board, and it is perfectly certain that such a plan would not tend to econony in administration, and must seriously affect the duties and responsibilities of Boards of Guardians. The hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Rowlands) would like the people of London to know who were the Members of this House, who had sympathy with the poor, and I cheered his statement. We should like the people to know, and we who oppose this Bill oppose it because we believe it would render the condition of the poor of London unendurable. Is there a matter with reference to Poor Law relief which requires more judgment than the question of outdoor relief? According to this Bill the exercise of beneficent discretion is to be abolished, and bye-laws lay down hard and fast rules as to the way in which outdoor relief is to be administered. When we come to the question of indoor relief, we find in the Bill a provision that a poor man may, by the rescript of the County Council, be removed from one end of London to another, and practically shut out from all intercourse with his friends. One other point is not unimportant. At present we have the administration of the Poor Law carried out by persons who give their gratuitous services in the interest of the poor. Under the Bill it is to be administered by paid officials. It is proposed to take the work out of the hands of men and women who live among the poor, and sympathize with the poor, and understand their wants, and to hand it over to the hard and inflexible management of persons who will derive their ideas of duty from the Central Department by which their salaries will be paid. If this is the only kind of sympathy which hon. Gentlemen

opposite have to offer to the poor, they are miserable comforters.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am very glad my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) is in the House, because I wish to emphasize a criticism which has already proceeded from this side of the House, and which I am sure will meet with his approval. Here is a Bill affecting enormous interests, and also affecting a number of public bodies, such as Boards of Guardians, the London County Council, and the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and dealing with matters of supreme interest to all classes in the Metropolis, and yet, although it was ordered to be printed on the 22nd of February, it was only distributed to Members two days ago. It is, in my opinion, monstrous that the Members of this House, and especially the Members for London, should be called upon at 48 hours' notice to consider a Bill of this importance, nor do I think that the objection to that course is lessened by the fact that the Bill has suddenly assumed the first place on the Notice Paper only a day before it comes on for discussion. Now, the object of this Bill, as appears from its title, is one which appeals very largely to the sympathies of those who represent the poorer districts of London. The equalization of the poor rate is an object which many Governments have recognized as being desirable so long as it can be carried out upon sound and proper lines, and the action of many Governments has been in that direction. The right hon. Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) has made a strong argument of the fact that London has now become one, and has said that as we have now provided for the unity of London, it is a natural consequence that we should provide also unity of assessment so far as poor rate and management are concerned. Another hon. Gentleman has, I think, stated that we might have adopted the plan of the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) who proposed to govern London by means of one Central Council and by Committees formed from it. As to what the hon. Member for Halifax has said, the fact of a town being one entity for all municipal purposes does not justify his argument that the Poor Law administration should also be one for the whole of London. Directly the contrary is now the case in nearly every one of the great towns of the kingdom, we have in Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and, in fact, in nearly all the other large towns, one Council managing municipal affairs, and in many cases two and three unions, with rates varying as much as 1s. in the £. The difficulty of dealing with questions of this kind has been recognized in connection with a very large area and a very large population, and, so far as the right hon. Member for Derby and his proposals are concerned, that right hon. Gentleman never attempted to treat the question of poor relief as one to be controlled by one body in London. As far as my recollection goes, the right hon. Gentleman proposed, while placing all municipal London under one body, to leave the Poor Law administration as it was, so that neither the fact of London being one for municipal purposes, nor the fact of the right hon. Member for Derby having dealt with the question of the unity of London, justifies the argument that if we deal as a whole with the one, we ought to deal as a whole with the other. As I have said, so far as the general principle is concerned, if it could be done with safety and on proper lines, equalization of poor rate is a thing of which we shall all approve. But here I must notice a remark made by the hon. Member for North-East Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) who complained not only that there was not one rate throughout London for matters of this kind, but also of the different modes of assessment in London, and alleged that not only did the poor suffer because of the differential high rate they had to bear, but that they were unfairly treated with reference to the assess-

ment for the rate, as compared with the more wealthy quarters of the Metropolis. The hon. Member showed what to me is a surprising ignorance of the present condition of things as to assessment in London. He seemed to be unaware of the fact that in 1869 the Metropolitan Valuation Act was passed, and that by that Act the surveyor of taxes was brought in with the express view of seeing that the assessment throughout the whole of London was on one basis. And not only that, but the deductions that are allowable are prescribed in the Act, and, further, any one parish can appeal against the assessment of any other parish if it chooses to do so, and all the valuations are brought to one centre. And so satisfied are most people with the mode of assessment adopted in London, that I have frequently heard it argued that in dealing with valuation for the whole country the same system ought to be applied as that which now applies to London, and that to secure uniformity of assessment the Metropolis Valuation Act should be extended, bringing in the surveyor of taxes, whose duty it would be to see that the assessments are uniform. I mention this in order that it may not be supposed that I assent to the extraordinary proposition of the hon. Member that the poorer parishes are unfairly dealt with in reference to assessment. I now come to the question of how it is proposed to effect the equalization of poor rate in London. Although hon. Gentlemen express themselves quite willing to reconsider any questions of detail or of management in the Bill, if we assent to its principle, I am led to make the remark that that is just the *crux* and difficulty of the whole business. And I say that, so far as I am concerned, I see no plan or machinery that will get rid of the fundamental difficulty which confronts every reformer who approaches that problem. It is proposed by this Bill to equalize the poor rate by absolutely sweeping away the whole independent action of Boards of Guardians. It is true you do not transfer those powers from the Boards of Guardians to the County Council, but you deprive them of all independent initiative and of all the inducements that now exist for good and economical administration.

Mr. Ritchie

I am bound to say that I think the point which was touched on by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax, and which has been alluded to by many of my Friends that, by a system of this kind, you will not only not get better men to serve on Boards of Guardians, but the worst men, is one of the strongest arguments against the proposal of this Bill. The object of amending the law should be to get better and stronger men in the local bodies than we have at present, but I want to know what man of almost any self-respect would consent to be a member of a Board of Guardians under such provisions as are contained in this Bill. The right hon. Member for Halifax stated objections to the proposal in the Bill on that particular point, and how did the right hon. Gentleman propose to meet the difficulty the existence of which he acknowledged? "Oh," he said, "on the same lines and by the same safeguards as those of the Bill. For instance, that Boards of Guardians should be allowed to frame a budget." I must say that is not a very tremendous power to place in their hands, looking to the fact that after framing the budget they are to present it to the County Council, and to abide by its decision as to the wants of the particular neighbourhoods and unions for which the Guardians are elected. That is to be one of the inducements for men to come on to the Boards of Guardians—that they shall be permitted to frame a budget. But that brings me to another difficulty in connection with the Bill. The Guardians of a district may frame a budget to meet the local wants, and the London County Council may revise and reduce it so that the Guardians cannot manage the work they have undertaken. No men of respectability would consent to act as Guardians under such conditions. Then the County Council is to prescribe the dietaries of inmates, to approve of by-laws regulating out-door relief, and to appoint officers; and this is called by the hon. Member for Poplar placing the Guardians under the County Council instead of the Local Government Board. I should like to know what would be the views of Boards of Guardians as to this being a mere transfer of powers from a central body to an elected body. I am not aware that the Local Govern-

ment Board possesses any such powers as it is proposed to give to the Council, and I shall be very sorry indeed if it did. The Guardians are also to furnish the Council with lists of the persons in receipt of out-door relief and the amounts received. The delicate and difficult work of Guardians would be intolerable under such conditions. Yet these conditions are essential if the poor rate is to be equalized, and it is therefore useless to speak of these matters as mere details to be revised by a Select Committee. If you are going to allow Boards of Guardians to dip into the common purse for out-door relief, it is essential that you should have strict control and supervision. The difficulty is inherent in the proposal itself, and no amount of modifications would enable you to secure this control in the proper quarter. The Bill would decrease the efficiency of the Boards of Guardians, and prevent men you have confidence in coming forward to take places on them. We have gone a long way in the direction—the safe direction—of making the indoor poor a common charge over London, there you do not require the same restrictions as in the case of the out-door relief. In my opinion, the proposal as to the outdoor relief would have two results. It would have the effect of largely increasing the rates. The districts that now pay least would be brought up to the level of those that pay most, and those which are most highly rated would probably find their rates raised. But a much more serious question is what would happen to the poor themselves? That is much more serious than the question of £ s. d. They would be demoralized by greater laxity in the giving of relief, and the increase of the rates would press heavily upon the poorer ratepayers and drag some of them down into pauperism. Outdoor relief is often attended with cruelty. In a large number of cases I am afraid that inadequacy of outdoor relief is a cause of starvation. It is often given in a haphazard and perfunctory way; people are dismissed with 3s. and a loaf and are lost sight of. It may be well to glance at what has been done in the direction of equalizing the rate. I am sorry that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bethnal Green should have thought it necessary to sneer at Members on this side of the House for what he called their professed sympathy with the poor. If he means by that any sympathy in the direction of the proposals contained in the Bill, I do not think it is the Members of the Party to which I have the honour to belong who can show the worst record. The first attempt was made by Lord Cranbrook when Mr. Gathorne Hardy; and it was owing to him that the Common Poor Fund was instituted in 1867; a fund which has done so much in the direction desired by those who have framed this Bill, namely, in the direction of equalizing the rates. The good work was continued in 1870 by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it was largely extended by the Act of last year. I will not go into the question as to which party does most for the poor as I do not think recriminations on such subjects are at all desirable. I believe that all of us to whatever party we belong are anxious to do all the good we can for our poorer fellow citizens. But however that may be, the fact remains, the Metropolitan Poor Fund was started in 1867, was extended in 1870, and largely developed by the Act of last year. Assuming that the Local Government Act had been in full operation during the year ended the 25th of March, 1888, which is the last year for which we have the figures, the effect of these changes would have been that the rate in the £ of poor rate expenditure chargeable to Chelsea would have been 1s. 6½d. instead of 2s. 2d.; in St. Pancras it would have been reduced from 2s. to a much lower sum; in Shoreditch it is 1s. 7½d. instead of 2s. 4½d.; in Bethnal Green 1s. 9½d. instead of 3s. 5½d.; in Whitechapel 1s. 6½d. instead of 2s. 6½d.; in St. George's-in-the-East 1s. 1½d. instead of 4s. 1½d.; in Stepney 1s. 8d. instead of 2s. 7d.; in Mile End Old Town 1s. 9d. instead of 2s. 9d.; in Poplar 1s. 11½d. instead of 2s. 6½d. Let the House consider what the result would be of adopting the proposals of the Bill, even supposing there was no increase in the rates. It is quite true that the profit to London under the Act of last year is not quite sufficient to meet the whole charge of 4d; it is sufficient to meet a charge of 3d.; but the proposal of 3d. was raised by the House

to 4d.; and that left a deficiency of £100,000, or not more than 1d. in the £. I can understand how it is that the hon. Member opposite has been somewhat misled in this matter. Because, as I understand, the London County Council have appropriated the profits they have made from licenses in other ways, and that left the 4d. to be the means of an increase upon the poor rate. But that is purely a matter of machinery. The amount of profit which London obtained was only £100,000 by the payment of 4d. for the poor, to which they were entitled under the Local Government Act. Well, now, Sir, it is assumed, when we speak of an equalization of poors rates, that the parishes which would suffer by the equalization would be the rich parishes, while the poorer parishes would be gainers; but this is an entire fallacy, and I will endeavour to prove it by figures. Allowing for the 4d. under the Local Government Act, the amount of the average poor rate, extended over the whole of London, would be 1s. 9d.; but this would be more than several parishes now pay. If the rate were equalized, the following parishes would pay more than they will under the existing arrangements: The City 3d. more, St. George's-in-the-East 7½d. more. Now, St. George's-in-the-East is about the poorest parish in the whole of London, but in consequence of the excellent administration of the Board of Guardians for St. George's-in-the-East and Whitechapel the rates are kept very low. Paddington, some parts of which are extremely poor, would pay 2s. 2d. more under the equalization scheme, St. Pancras 1½d. more, Shoreditch, ½d. more, Whitechapel, another of the poorest parishes of the Metropolis, but where the Poor Law administration is very good, would pay 2¼d. more, Stepney ¾d. more, St. Saviour's 2½d. more, and Camberwell 3d. more.

*Mr. J. STUART: What is the sum of the poor rate in those places?

*Mr. RITCHIE: I have not thought it necessary to trouble the House with the actual sum.

*Mr. J. STUART: What would be the common rate over London?

*Mr. RITCHIE; It would be 1s. 9d., if you take the 4d. under the Local Government Act. The poor rate amounts to over 2s. 1d.; but if you allow the 4d. under the Local Government Act it would be 1s. 9d.

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, East): What Unions would pay less?

Mr. RITCHIE: I have made inquiry in anticipation of the right hon. Gentleman's question, and have provided myself with the means of informing him. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Poplar (Mr. S. Buxton) spoke as if this were a question of the poorer parishes at the East End, and said that was where we desired to encourage manufacturers, but that that part of London was heavily handicapped by the rates, which were so high as to militate against manufactories being started and carried on there, whereby the employment of the people was diminished. It so happens, however, that if the equalization scheme were adopted, St. George's-in-the-East would have to pay 7½d. more than it will now.

*Mr. S. BUXTON: Where does the right hon. Gentleman get those figures; because from a return recently presented to Parliament I find that the poor rate for St. George's-in-the-East, after making the proper deductions, was last year 1s. 10½d. I cannot see how that is 7½d. less than the average rate of 1s. 9d.

*Mr. RITCHIE: I have taken the figures from a calculation made at the Local Government Board this morning, and have taken the figures for the year ending Lady Day, 1888, and have made allowance for the relief allowed under the Local Government Act.

*Mr. S. BUXTON: I am sorry again to interrupt; but I want to be clear on this point. I gather from the Return I hold in my hand—a Circular relating to the poor rate at St. George's-in-the-East—that the rate there last year was 1s. 10½d., which is after the adjustment of the right hon. Gentleman, and I understand the average rate to be 1s. 9d.; therefore I cannot see how St. George's-in-the-East would pay 7d. more than at present.

*Mr. RITCHIE: The rate for St. George's-in-the-East, supposing the Local Government Act had been in full operation, in 1888 would have been 1s. 1½d., and the difference be-

tween 1s. 1½d. and 1s. 9d. is 7½d. I can assure the hon. Gentleman my figures are correct. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Poplar says the rate was 1s. 10½d.

*MR. S. BUXTON: Yes, in St. George's-in-the-East last year.

*MR. RITCHIE: But that takes no account of the relief under the Local Government Act for indoor poor. The rate for St. George's-in-the-East was 1s. 10½d., and the relief given under the Local Government Act would have brought it down to 1s. 1½d., the result being, as far as it concerns the eastern districts, which it is said would so greatly benefit by the equalization scheme, that St. George's-in-the-East would pay 7½d. more than it will now; Shoreditch would pay 1½d. more, Whitechapel 2¼d. more, Stepney ¾d. more, Bethnal Green ¾d. less, Mile End ¼d. less, and Poplar 2½d. less. That is the nett result in the East of London, and, on the average, it will be found that, instead of the East End paying less under this Bill, it would have to pay more. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has asked me whether Fulham would pay less. Fulham would pay less; Marylebone would pay ½d. less, Hackney 2½d. less, and Holborn 5¼d. less. This is a very large deduction, no doubt, but I am afraid the administration of the Board of Guardians there has not been everything that could be desired, the evidence of which is that their rate is so high. Bethnal Green would pay ¼d. less, Mile End ¼d. less, St. Olave's—a poor parish—¼d. less, and Wandsworth and Clapham 1¾ less. Thirteen Unions would pay less; five would have to pay 1d., four over 1d., one under 2½d., one 3½d., one 5¼d. less, and Woolwich 6¼d. less. But as far as Woolwich is concerned, this calculation is upset by the fact that in Woolwich there is a large amount of Government property that is not brought under assessment. I find that the amount of that property is no less than £40,000, out of a ratable value of £76,000, and Woolwich has a grant from the Government in respect to that property, but it is not brought into account in regard to the poor rate. The statement that Woolwich would pay 6¼d. less is not accurate, and I think Woolwich would be a loser rather than a gainer by the Bill.

*MR. J. STUART: Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us what were the figures for St George's-in-the-East after the adjustment by the Local Government Board?

*MR. RITCHIE: I have given them. For St. George's-in-the-East the rate per pound up to Lady Day, 1888, was 2s. 1d., and the poor rate that would have been levied if the provisions of the Local Government Act had come into operation, would have been 1s. 1d.

*MR. J. STUART: That was what I wanted to know.

*MR. RITCHIE: I am sorry to trouble the House with all these figures; but I think they are very germane, and anticipate very largely what I know is a prevalent opinion, that on the whole cost of the administration of the Poor Law over the entire Metropolis, the poorer districts would gain largely by the equalization, at the expense of the richer districts. I have shown that, with one or two exceptions, this is a fallacy, and that no districts in London would suffer more under this Bill than many of the poorer one—that is, always estimating that the amount spent in poor relief would remain as it was in 1888. Whether it is likely to rise or fall, when we increase the area of contribution without increasing the area of control by the Board of Guardians, I will leave the House to judge. There is another question dealt with by the Bill, which I think few of us who have seen the details of the measure would wish to have solved in the way proposed. I allude to the suggested transfer of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. I am not one of those who say that at no period whatever should the powers and control now exercised by the Metropolitan Asylums Board be transferred to the London County Council; but I do say that it would

be a most dangerous and unwise thing to transfer those powers to a body which has only been three months in existence. Without saying one word against my own offspring, I think that all of us would desire to see the London County Council a little older and a little more experienced before we put upon its shoulders such delicate work as is now being done by the Metropolitan Asylums Board. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill) has made some remarks about the management of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, with which I cannot at all agree. He said it was a body which not only did not have the confidence of the public, but which did not deserve that confidence. I think there are very few people who have inquired into the enormous amount of excellent and valuable work done by the Metropolitan Asylums Board, who would endorse that remark, and as far as I am concerned I must record my protest against language of that kind being applied to a body as to whom no attempt has been made to show that they have not faithfully discharged the duties which have been cast upon them. The hon. Gentleman gave one illustration of the administration of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. The great charge he made was with reference to a particular point—namely, that the Local Government Board had approved of a sum being spent on Dr. McKellar, without a shadow of justification, on his retirement. Now, Sir, I protest against that, and I ask what was it that the Metropolitan Asylums Board did with reference to this matter? Here was a gentleman who had been for 16 or 17 years faithfully discharging his duty as medical officer. The Metropolitan Asylums Board had come to the conclusion that one of their hospitals, not in the interest of the ratepayers, be closed, and they desired Dr. McKellar to resign, not because he had not performed his duties in a most exemplary manner, but because they wanted to close the hospital, and they gave him a year's pay. I think that bears favourable comparison with many of the amounts that are paid in public departments when such an operation is to be performed; and I am certain of this, that there are no private employers who would have thought of getting rid of an *employé* of that kind after so many years faithful service, without paying him as much, and in many cases more. The Local Government Board consented to the Metropolitan Asylums Board paying Dr. McKellar. I am sorry to have to remind the House of a matter of detail, but it was the only illustration which the hon. Gentleman who moved this Bill gave of the incapacity or corruption of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. Sir, I shall certainly vote for the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Peckham for the reasons that I have given. I do not believe it possible to create a machinery which would secure proper and due administration if the cost of outdoor relief was to allow the Scotch Fishery Boards Vote to be put upon the whole of London as well as the cost of indoor relief. I do not believe it would be advantageous, but the reverse, to the very parishes which those hon. Gentlemen desire to assist. I believe it would be bad for the ratepayers and bad for the poor, and bad for the administration, which we ought to maintain at the very highest point of efficiency.

*Mr. STUART: I wish to reply very shortly to one or two of the points urged by the right hon. Gentleman. Now, what is the extent of outdoor relief in London? It amounts to under £200,000 a year, which is less than one-tenth part of the whole expenditure, and, therefore, the equalization of poor rate which is embodied in this Bill, extends to subjects far beyond that amount, and involves many other items than outdoor relief, and which is only one of a considerable number of items. In the second place, hon. Members on the other side of the House have argued so frequently, as if the indoor paupers constituted the only point in respect of which relief was given, that I think I ought to state what the figures are. The sum given from the Common Poor Fund last year was £920,000. Of that £250,000 was composed of the 5d. allowed for indoor paupers; £150,000 for pauper children, and £200,000 for salaries and rations of officers, and £200,000 for maintenance of lunatics. With respect to the salaries and rations of officers, it was urged on the other side by one or two Members that the freedom of Boards

of Guardians in dealing with their officers, would be taken away by this Bill, whereas at present in respect of their officers, they are under the control completely of the Local Government Board. Now, the President of the Local Government Board has advanced a very important argument—namely, that the Bill would fail in its purpose—not the equalization of the poor rate, which is its purpose—but fail in what might be conceived to be a sub-purpose—the relief of the poorer districts of London. Now, the right hon. Gentleman has taken the case of St. George's-in-the-East, and here he points out there will be a very great increase, or will be, when the Local Government Act operates, in the poor rate. The case of St. George's-in-the-East is almost wholly exceptional.

*MR. RITCHIE: I gave the hon. Gentleman many others.

*MR. STUART: I am going to deal with that matter. Any relief given by that 4d. from indoor paupers that relief is proportionate to the indoor pauperism practically. Now it is not the case that the poorest parishes are at all invariably those parishes in London where there is the greatest relative proportion of indoor pauperism. It does not go by the poorness or the richness of the parish. The consequence of that is that there have been inequalities created by the Local Government Act in addition to the inequalities already existing. That being so, I think there is every reason to take up the position that we take up, I say that the equalization of the poor rates over London being in itself a desirable thing, and that being the essence of this Bill, a Select Committee ought to be appointed in order to investigate how it can be done, and the grounds upon which it can be done. I must say that the whole sum of this discussion comes to this, that the division on this Bill can scarcely be regarded as anything less than a division simply on the question, whether the poor rate in London is to be equalized or not. The position we take up is this, that London is to be treated as a whole, that the poor and rich of London are to be put into the same box, as far as the poor rate and many other things are concerned—and this Bill deals with them so far as the poor rate is concerned.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (North Kensington): Mr. Speaker, I will only intervene between the House and a Division for a very few minutes. I was very much surprised during the remarks of my hon. and learned Friend, the Member for Holborn to hear considerable cries of divide from hon. Members opposite who support this Bill. Now surely, Sir, my hon. and learned Friend, of all Members of this House perhaps, has about the best right or the best claim to address this House on such a subject as this, for he is one of the most recent of Metropolitan Members who have received their mandates direct from their constituencies. And it does seem to me, Sir, that this attempt to stop the mouths of the Metropolitan Members on such a question as this, is a part of the same tactics that have been followed by the promoters of this Bill in bringing it on for Second Reading within 48 hours of its being in the hands of hon. Members. Sir, I for my part shall most strongly support the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Peckham. I feel quite certain, having followed very carefully the discussions in this House on the Local Government Bill last year, that when we passed that Bill, when we conferred upon London a Central Authority, we had no idea that we should be also imposing upon the various and varied districts in London anything like a hide-bound uniformity in matters of Poor Law administration. Why, Sir, between many of the districts of London there is no more similarity in their requirements or in the character of their Poor Law administration than there is between Macedonia and Monmouth. Both begin with M, as Battersea and Bethnal Green begin with B, but I venture to say in many points the similarity goes no further. The ratepayers of Kensington, for whom I have the honour to speak in this House, are already burdened enough with their poor rates. They are willing to pay for their own expenditure—that is, for the expenditure sanctioned by their own Guardians, whom they have elected themselves; but the ratepayers of Kensington do not

see—and I think they will not see—that if the constituents, say, if the hon. Member for Bethnal Green choose to be lavish in their expenditure on out-door relief, that they should be called upon to make up the difference. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has shown amply and beyond all doubt that this is not a question between the richer and the poorer districts of London. It is the poorer districts which will mainly suffer if this Bill become law. In the parish of Kensington the feeling is not that the richer wish to separate from the poorer districts, but that the poorer districts wish to separate from the richer. I represent not one of the richer, but one of the poorer districts, where we are tied up on matter of Poor Law administration to South Kensington, and we have often petitioned to be separated from that division. I say it is not a question between the richer districts and the poorer, and I certainly hope that the House will not affirm the Second Reading of this Bill.

Mr. Pickersgill rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put," but Mr. Speaker stated that that Motion was unnecessary, as no Member had risen to continue the debate.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 181; Noes, 217.—(Div. List, No. 131.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

MASTER AND SERVANT BILL. (No. 205.)

Considered in Committee, and reported; as amended to be considered upon Friday, at two of the clock.

CRUELTY TO CHILDREN PREVENTION BILL. (No. 87.)

Committee deferred till Wednesday, the 19th of June.

SUPPLY [28TH MAY].

Resolution reported. (See p. 1274.)

Question proposed, "That the House agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury to allow this Vote to stand over until to-morrow, as I wish to raise a question with regard to it. At the request of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian the Vote was agreed to yesterday without discussion. The point I wish to raise is as to the power of the Home Secretary to ask the Special Commissioners to dine in this House and meet one of the persons engaged in getting up the forgeries which have been investigated before those Judges. If the Home Secretary had been present I would have raised it now.

MR. JACKSON: If the hon. Gentleman presses his objection I will postpone the Report, but it must be clearly understood the Vote must be disposed of not later than to-morrow.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I may point out that the Home Secretary's Vote has been taken, and that there is no sum included in the Vote on Account upon which the hon. Gentleman can raise the question he desires to discuss.

MR. T. M. HEALY: In that case I will withdraw my objection.

Resolution agreed to.

COURT OF SESSION AND BILL CHAMBER (SCOTLAND) CLERKS [SALARIES.] (No. 214.)

Resolution reported—

"That it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Salaries of certain Clerks and Officers of the Court of Session and Bill Chamber in Scotland, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to regulate the number and duties of the Clerk of the Court of Session and Bill Chamber in Scotland, and for other purposes."

Resolution agreed to.

House adjourned at Five minutes before Six o'clock.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 13.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [JUNE 7.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 30th May, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

BISLEY COMMON.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary for War, what are the terms and conditions upon which the War Office has arranged for the use of Bisley Common by the Volunteers?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The arrangements as to Bisley Common are not yet completed. My right hon. Friend gave a general idea of their nature on the 8th of March last, and I will gladly add any further information when it is in my power.

IRELAND—PRISON CHAPLAINS.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Newry): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland, whether it is the fact that Captain Wilson, the Governor of Derry Prison, told the Rev. John Doherty, Roman Catholic Administrator of Derry and chaplain of the gaol, on the occasion of his visit to the prison on the 20th instant, that he was instructed to "remonstrate with him" for calling to see "a certain class of prisoners, such as the Rev. Mr. Stephens, Mr. Kelly, and Mr. M'Hugh oftener than others confined in the prison;" whether he can tell the House who it was that instructed the Governor of the prison to make this remonstrance; whether the instructions of the Irish Executive impose upon the chaplain of a prison the duty of seeing on every occasion of a visit to the prison all the prisoners of his denomination, or whether it is sufficient for him to visit those who, in his opinion, need a visit or desire one; and, whether it comes within the province of the Governor to exercise any authority over the chaplain in the discharge of the spiritual duties of his office?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): The General Prisons Board report that it is the case that the Governor of Londonderry Prison communicated with the Roman Catholic chaplain for calling to see a certain class of prisoners more often than others. He did so in pursuance of general instructions on the subject issued by the General Prisons Board. It is not the duty of a chaplain to see every prisoner on each occasion of visiting a prison. His duties are fully defined in the prison rules. When a chaplain uses the privileges of his office in paying frequent or protracted personal visits to individual prisoners of a particular class in a manner not contemplated by the prison rules it is, in the opinion of the Board, absolutely necessary that the Governor should interfere to prevent such an abuse of his privileges as chaplain.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Is it possible to distinguish between a personal and a spiritual visit?

MR. MADDEN: It is left to the discretion of the Governor, acting of course, under the control of the Prisons Board.

MR. MACNEILL: May I ask whether the Governor of Derry Gaol is the same official whose error of judgment was admitted by the Chief Secre-

tary on 28th March, 1889, in refusing to allow two female prisoners from Gweedore to wear warm clothing which had been supplied to them by friends for the journey between Derry and Letterkenny; and, whether the Government intend to take any steps with regard to such errors of judgment on the part of this official?

MR. MADDEN: The Governor of Londonderry Prison is the same official who refused some articles of clothing to two female prisoners, on the grounds that they were, in his opinion, unnecessary. The Prisons Board, having already conveyed to him their views with respect to the case, see no ground calling for further action on their part.

MR. MAC NEILL: Did the Prisons Board convey their disapproval of the conduct of the Governor?

MR. MADDEN: The Prisons Board made to this Gentleman a statement of their views upon the matter.

RAPID DRIVING.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if there are no regulations in London, such as there are in all European towns, against rapid driving round corners; why many cabs and carriages and all butchers' carts are allowed to dash round corners over the footpaths of crowded thoroughfares without any interference on the part of the police; and, whether he will now see that regulations are made to protect foot-passengers, and that the police are instructed to enforce them?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): Furious driving, whether round corners or otherwise, is punishable under 2 and 3 Vict., cap. 47, and 6 and 7 Vict., cap. 86. The police always interfere when cases of careless or dangerous driving come under their notice, but it impossible for them to be at every corner. The above-named statutory provisions were made for the protection of foot-passengers, and during the past year more than 600 cases of breaches of these Acts have been dealt with by the police, who have been instructed to enforce them.

SIR. G. CAMPBELL: If I bring to the notice of the right hon. Gentleman cases in which the police themselves have seen cabs driven dangerously go pass without remonstrance, would he not think it a case for interference?

*MR. MATTHEWS: There are statutory provisions in force, and I do not see what action we can take in the matter.

VISCOUNT MANDEVILLE.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what course has been taken by the Public Prosecutor in the case of G. E. D. Montague, known as Viscount Mandeville, who was prosecuted for obtaining money on false pretences, but whose prosecution was eventually withdrawn by the private prosecutor, owing to what was stated to be a "change of circumstances"; whether, as stated in the report in the public journals, on the application to withdraw the prosecution at the hearing on the 17th May, the Magistrate appealed to the Counsel for the Prosecution, as a man of standing at the Bar, to assure him that no criminal offence had been committed, but the Counsel declined to give this assurance, and the Magistrate then said:

> "Information has been laid before me that there has been a criminal offence, this is an offence against the public. Bargain or no bargain, the Crown has a right to prosecute. The information must be laid before the Public Prosecutor;"

and whether the Public Prosecutor has sifted, or is sifting, the case to the bottom.

*MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Director of Public Prosecutions that this case of Lord Mandeville's was referred to him by the Magistrate on the 20th inst. He at once proceeded to endeavour to obtain evidence of the facts of the transaction, but is not at present in a position to say whether such evidence will support a criminal charge. I may observe that questions asked in this House concerning cases which are at the time the subject of legal investigation are not calculated to lessen the difficulties which always exist in sifting such cases to the bottom.

THE NAVAL REVIEW AT PORTSMOUTH.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask to the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he is aware that at the Review held at Portsmouth in celebration of Her Majesty's birthday, on

the 25th May, every executive rank in the Navy was represented except the warrant officers; whether he is aware that, after having taken part in all preliminary parades, the warrant officers were informed that their services would be dispensed with on the Review day, as, from the absence of cocked hat and epaulettes, their uniform was not suitable; whether this action was taken with his knowledge; and whether, in view of the foregoing facts, the Board of Admiralty will direct that warrant officers shall wear such distinctive uniform as will permit them to take part in such reviews, especially as such uniform is provided by the officers at their own cost?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): It is not the case that warrant officers were precluded from taking part in the Review at Portsmouth on account of their uniform not being suitable. The reason for the non-employment of these officers was simply that there were no duties for the performance of which their services were required. The Warrant Officers of the *St. Vincent* had been employed for drill in the preliminary parades, but on the day itself the *Excellent* supplied lieutenants and sub-lieutenants as company officers, whose rank corresponds with the officers of the Army who took part in the Review. The warrant officers would have been called out in their existing uniform if they had been required.

LEVEL CROSSINGS.

MR. HOWARD (Middlesex, Tottenham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any, and what, communication has been received from the Great Eastern Railway Company respecting the Scotland Green level crossing between Tottenham and Park Stations; where a fatal accident has recently occurred; and what steps are being taken to prevent similar accidents in future?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade were informed on the 11th May that, the Local Board of Tottenham having expressed a desire to have two over-line bridges, the Company erected an over-line Bridge at Marsh Gate, which is in use, and have ordered the erection of another at Scotland Green. A Copy of the Company's letter was sent to the Honourable Member on the 14th May.

PAROCHIAL POPULATION.

MR. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the information at his command would show that it would be an accurate deduction from the Return of 1881 to state that the population of England and Wales is distributed between their parishes as follows:—773 parishes with population under 50; 1,143 parishes above 50 and under 100; 2,398 parishes above 100 and under 200; 4,443 parishes above 200 and under 500; 2,628 parishes above 500 and under 1,000; 1,475 parishes above 1,000 and under 2,000; 1,057 parishes above 2,000 and under 5,000; 844 parishes above 5,000; making a total of 14,761 parishes? I also beg to ask whether, from the information at his command, the following calculation, excluding the Metropolis, shows how the parishes of England and Wales are distributed between the Poor Law Unions, namely, 105 unions comprising less than 10 parishes; 171 unions comprising 10 and up to 20 parishes; 259 unions comprising 20 and up to 40 parishes; 65 unions comprising 40 and up to 60 parishes; 15 unions comprising 60 and up to 10 parishes; three unions comprising 80 and up to 100 parishes; making a total of 618 unions?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, St. George's): I may state with regard to these questions that the statement as to the number of unions comprising certain numbers of parishes which is given in the question is substantially accurate. With regard to the number of parishes with populations above and under the numbers stated in the question, I have no return giving the information with the classification stated. I shall be happy, however, to give my hon. Friend the latest statements we have had prepared on the subject.

NORTH SEA LIQUOR TRAFFIC CONVENTION.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secre-

tary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the loss of a fisherman's life in the North Sea last week from the effects of obtaining spirits from a floating grog shop; if he can state what steps are being taken for giving effect to the North Sea Liquor Traffic Convention of 1887, and the names of those countries which have passed the necessary laws, also how the other contracting countries stand as regards legislation; and whether any steps can be taken with the object of bringing the Convention into speedy operation?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): Attention has not been called to the incident referred to, as far as the Foreign Office is concerned, but it has been noticed. In Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, and the Netherlands, the necessary laws to give effect to this Convention have been, or are about to be passed; and it is hoped that the French Law will be passed before the summer recess of the Legislature. Until the French Law is passed, it is obviously not possible to bring the Convention into operation. As soon as that is the case Her Majesty's Government will do their best to procure the operation of the Convention.

LIBERATION OF A CONVICT.

MR. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether James Read, who was convicted for embezzling £100, and sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment, has been liberated after serving five months and 18 days; and if he has been liberated, can the Home Secretary state what were the reasons which caused him to recommend a pardon being granted to James Read?

*MR. MATTHEWS: This man was liberated after serving six months. It was on the recommendation of the learned Judge who tried the case that I felt justified in revising the sentence.

VOLUNTEER OFFICERS.

COLONEL EYRE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary for War why Volunteer Officers cannot be presented as Volunteers at Her Majesty's *levées*.

MR. BRODRICK: The regulations as to the presentation of Volunteers at *levées* are made by the Lord Chamberlain. Volunteer officers otherwise eligible for presentation may wear their full dress uniform.

POST CARDS.

MR. WHITLEY (Liverpool, Everton): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is now in a position to inform the House what course the Government intend to pursue in reference to the price of post cards?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): The price of post cards will be reduced on and after the 1st July next. At the present time stout post cards are sold in packets of 12 at 8d. a packet. In future they will be sold in packets of 10 for 6d. In addition to the stout cards it is intended to issue for the present a limited number of thin cards in packets of 10 for 5½d., but as it is obvious that a single quality of card will in many ways be more convenient, it is hoped that it may be found practicable at no distant date to dispense with thin cards altogether.

IRELAND—MR. O'BRIEN'S RELEASE FROM PRISON.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to a paragraph in the *Dublin Mail and Express* of the 25th inst., announcing that "Mr. William O'Brien's release from prison was celebrated on Thursday night at Middleton, County Cork;" that "a torchlight procession passed through the streets, the houses being generally illuminated;" that "the houses of six Protestants who refused to illuminate were riddled with stones;" and that "in some cases the inmates narrowly escaped personal injuries from the stones thrown;" and, whether the Government intend to take any steps for the protection of the Protestant minority in the South of Ireland?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The facts are substantially as stated. Most of the houses injured were occupied by Protestants, but in two cases by Roman Catholics. Some prosecutions arising out of these

proceedings are in contemplation; and every effort will be made to secure the safety of all loyal-abiding citizens.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: In the case of a row of this sort how is it that the police are not able to protect the houses from injury?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That may have been the point which my hon. Friend desired to bring forward, but it is not the question which was placed on the paper. I will inquire into the matter.

MR. MAC NEILL: How is it that the right hon. Gentleman has been able to discover the religion of these householders, when in answer to questions from this side of the House he has repeatedly professed his inability to give the religion of special jurors?

MR. CLANCY: Is there any reason for supposing that these houses were attacked because they were occupied by Protestants?

No answer was returned to these questions.

WALES—OUTRAGES ON CATTLE.

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to alleged outrages on cattle on Sarnan Park Farm, in the County of Cardigan, on the 11th and 13th of April and the 10th and 18th of May last; whether such outrages resulted in the death of two steers worth £14 each, and two cows worth about £16 each after some hours' agony; whether post mortem examinations revealed the fact that death in each resulted from perforation by three-cornered sharp instruments introduced into the intestines; whether the first of such outrages took place soon after the visits of the tithe bailiffs to the farm; whether the owner is a farmer who has taken an active part in the anti-tithe agitation; whether the police have taken any steps to discover the author of the outrage; and, whether their efforts have been attended with any success?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Chief Constable reports to me that no information was given to the police at the time when the alleged outrages took place. Subsequently, on the 14th instant, the local constable, hearing that some cattle-maiming had taken place, immediately visited the farm and was told that two bullocks had died about a fortnight before, also one cow on the 11th, and another cow on the 13th. In the last case a local farrier made an examination and found two small bruises inside the animal, which he considered to be the cause of death. On the matter being reported to the Chief Constable, he made every inquiry, and ordered the Superintendent to proceed to the farm on the 27th, and to have the bodies of all the cattle exhumed and carefully examined, but it turns out, unfortunately, that the carcases of the dead cattle had been boiled for pigs. The police, therefore, cannot proceed with their inquiries. I understand that the farm is one which had been recently visited for distraint, but I have no knowledge as to any part taken by the farmer in the agitation.

MR. B. ROWLANDS: Has the right hon. Gentleman been informed that a charge has be made against the police constables by the Police Committee of the County of Cardigan for alleged remissness in the performance of their duty?

MR. MATTHEWS: No such information has reached me.

THE COMMISSION ON THE WELSH SUNDAY CLOSING ACT.

MR. ARTHUR WILLIAMS (Glamorganshire, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, prior to the appointment of the Chairman and Members of the Royal Commission on the Welsh Sunday Closing Act, it was made known to him that, in the unanimous opinion of the Members representing Welsh constituencies, both Liberal and Conservative, the appointment of Lord Herschell as Chairman of the Commission would command the confidence of all sections and all the interests affected; whether Lord Herschell was, under these circumstances, invited to place his services at the disposal of the Queen; and, whether, when it was decided to place County Court Judges on the Commission, any Welsh-speaking County Court Judge was asked to serve?

MR. MATTHEWS: It would be contrary to all precedent to make a statement in this House as to the particular course of action followed by the

Minister responsible for advising Her Majesty as to the constitution of a Royal Commission. No such communication as is referred to with regard to Lord Herschell ever reached me.

MR. A. WILLIAMS: Am I to understand as an answer to my question on a matter of fact that the right hon. Member says no communication was made to him?

MR. MATTHEWS: I said so, Sir, most distinctly, and I meant it.

MR. A. WILLIAMS: But did I not personally wait upon the right hon. Gentleman accompanied by a Conservative Welsh Member and communicate the matter to him? Surely the right hon. Gentleman must remember that I did so?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no recollection of any such communication.

MR. A. WILLIAMS: I must ask another question. Perhaps I may be permitted to do so, in order to recall the circumstance to the right hon. Gentleman's memory. Is it not a fact that I, as representing officially the Liberal Members for Wales, and accompanied by the hon. Member for Carnarvon (Mr. Swetenham) as a Conservative, waited upon the right hon. Gentleman at the Home Office in order to explain to him in reference to a paragraph which had appeared in the local Welsh Press, stating that the expression of opinion that Lord Herschell should be made Chairman of the Commission, was a Liberal Party move that the appointment of Lord Herschell would not be regarded as a party move, but that it was the unanimous opinion of the Welsh people, expressed through all their representatives, that Lord Herschell's appointment would command the confidence of the whole Welsh people.

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. Member did not convey to my mind that he was taking upon himself to interfere in a matter which exclusively belonged to me, namely, advising Her Majesty as to who should be appointed to a Royal Commission.

MR. A. WILLIAMS: Is it not a fact that it is a constitutional right of Members of this House, and one constantly exercised, to make communications to Ministers who are responsible for these appointments? Is it not a right exercised over and over again, and was it not so exercised in reference to the appointments to the Special Commission? Surely, the right hon. Gentleman does not persist in giving me this answer. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, are we to understand, for it is the only inference we can draw from what he has said, that the unanimous opinion of the Welsh people, expressed through their representatives, in favour of the appointment of the distinguished Lord, has been disregarded by the reponsible Minister of the Crown?

MR. MATTHEWS: The appointment of Lord Herschell on this Commission would have been practically impossible, inasmuch as he had previously undertaken to fulfil the duties of Chairman to another Commission.

THE VISIT OF THE SHAH OF PERSIA.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the contemplated visit of the Shah to this country will entail any expenditure of public moneys; whether, if so, any estimate has been made as to the amount of this expenditure, and it is contemplated to present a Supplementary Estimate during the present Session to provide for it; whether the contemplated visit of the Emperor of Germany to this country will entail any expenditure of public moneys; and whether, if so, it is contemplated to present a Supplementary Estimate during the present Session to provide for it?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The visit of the Emperor of Germany is a private visit, and will not therefore require, as far as I know, any provision to be made from public moneys. The visit of the Shah is not a private visit. Her Majesty will entertain him during his residence at the palaces, but a provision will also be necessary for the purposes of his visit as it was in 1873. It must, of course, be made by Supplementary Estimate, but I cannot at present give the date when that will be laid upon the Table.

MR. LABOUCHERE: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Shah comes here by invitation from Her Majesty's Government, and whether the Supplementary Estimate will be laid on the Table of the House in time to afford an opportunity to hon. Members to discuss it before the money is spent?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Yes, Sir; His Majesty does come here by invitation, but as I have already stated, I am not able to say when the Estimate will be laid on the Table.

NORTH SEA LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I wish to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether it has been brought to his knowledge that the mate and crew of the trawler *Londesborough*, when fishing with the "Red Cross Fleet" about 70 miles east of Lowestoft, obtained on 22nd May two bottles of gin from a "Coper"; that they all got drunk except the cook, with the result that one of the crew threw himself into the sea and was drowned; and whether it is intended to make any inquiry as to the circumstances under which the "Coper" evaded the vigilance of the cruisers with the fishing fleet?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes, Sir; my attention has been drawn to the circumstances stated by the hon. Member, and I have given directions for proceedings to be taken against the mate of the *Londesborough* under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1854. The North Sea Liquor Traffic Convention is not yet in operation, so the inquiry indicated by the hon. Member could not be instituted.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT—BOUNDARY ALTERATIONS.

MR. ALFRED PEASE (York): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, if, in the case of those boundary alterations where the recommendations of the Commissioners may have been approved of by the County Councils of both the counties affected, the Local Government Board, in order to expedite matters, will consent to dispense with any future local inquiry, and at once introduce the necessary Provisional Orders Bill?

*MR. RITCHIE: The hon. Member will observe, on reference to Section 54 of the Local Government Act, that no alteration can be made in the boundary of a county except on a representation as provided for by the Section. When such a representation is made it becomes the duty of the Local Government Board, under the statute, to direct an inquiry, unless for special reasons they think that the representation ought not to be entertained. The Board are precluded, therefore, by express statutory provision, from issuing a provisional order without local inquiry after due notice. It must also be borne in mind that in connection with the alteration of the boundary of a county there are incidental matters to be considered and provided for by the order which it is very desirable should be discussed at the inquiry.

IRELAND—ESTATES OF THE LONDON COMPANIES IN ULSTER.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact that the charters under which the London Companies obtained lands in Ulster contained conditions obliging them to devote, in great part, the proceeds of those estates to purposes of public utility in Ulster; and, if so, whether, in view of the sale of the Irish estates of the Companies in question, the Government will institute any inquiry into the manner in which the conditions referred to are to be fulfilled in the future?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I take it that if the Companies are acting illegally their action can be surveyed and stopped by a Court of Law. With regard to the other part of the question I have to remind the hon. Member that the hon. Member for Derry has a Motion on the Paper dealing with this question. When that comes on there will be an opportunity for discussion.

MR. CLANCY: Supposing that the Motion never comes on, what course will be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: When that eventuality occurs I shall be ready to answer the question.

In reply to further questions by Mr. CLANCY and Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.),

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said: I understand that the main portion of this property is devoted already to purposes of public utility. If wrong is being done it is a matter for inquiry. As, however, a Motion is to be brought before the House, I presume that it is intended to raise the whole question.

EXTRA MAIL GUARDS.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster

General what is the cause of the delay in granting the new uniforms to the extra mail guards appointed on the Limited Mail Service, Midland Great Western Railway, Ireland; and whether the appointment of those guards is a temporary or permanent one?

*Mr. RAIKES: I find that the Contractors for Clothing are responsible for the delay in providing the uniform for the men to whom the hon. Member refers. Suitable notice has been taken of the delay. One of these men holds the appointment of Mail Guard, but the other two men belong to the class of postmen at the Post Offices at Mullingar and Athlone respectively. Although these postmen have conducted themselves satisfactorily, it would not be to the advantage of the Service that I should limit the freedom of selection by engaging to employ them permanently on travelling duties.

THE DRAPERS' COMPANY'S ESTATE IN ULSTER.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the following communication, sent to the agent of the Drapers' Estate, county Derry, by the Irish Land Commission—

"Sir,—The Irish Land Commissioners have caused the 54 holdings on what is known as the Brackaghslievegallion division of this estate, and which are comprised in the agreements in the schedule herewith named to be inspected. These agreements appear to have been executed within the following dates: Six in October and 25 in December, 1888; 20 in January and three in March, 1889. It appears that in the vast majority of these cases judicial rents have been fixed by the County Court Judge prior to the execution of the agreements, and that the original rents were in such cases inserted in the agreements as being the rents payable by the tenants, and that all information as to the existence of orders fixing the judicial rents was withheld from the Commissioners. It further appears that at the date of or subsequent to the signing of these agreements receipts were given by the solicitors of the company to many of the tenants for arrears of rent due prior to 1st November, 1885, and for costs and receipts for two years' interest to 1st November, 1888, undefined sums of money, described in the receipts as the 'purchase money,' and apparently calculated at eighteen times the original rent. The total sums of unpaid cash named in these receipts, when added to the purchase money mentioned in the receipts so given for interest, appear to amount to the price named in the agreement for sale;"

Is it the intention of the Government to lay the facts before the Attorney General with a view to seeing whether a prosecution can be directed against the guilty parties; have the Land Commission been obliged to decline to sanction these transactions, and to declare that the tenants are in an impoverished condition; and will the Papers on the subject be laid before Parliament?

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, N.): I have also to ask the right hon Gentleman if he can inform the House of the reasons which obliged the Irish Land Purchase Commissioners to refuse to sanction the proposed sale by the Drapers' Company of their Irish estate to their tenants; and whether it may be understood that no further proposal of the kind on the part of this company will be entertained until the House has had an opportunity of expressing its opinion upon the attempted transaction?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: With the permission of the House, I shall now also reply to the question of the hon. and learned Member for Longford. The ground upon which the Commissioners declined to sanction the advances applied for under the agreements between the Drapers' Company and the tenants on the portion of their estate mentioned, are fully set forth in the Commissioners' letter of May 16 to the company, which has been already published in the public Press, and of which I shall be happy to show the hon. Members a copy should they so desire. Should any further proposal of the kind be submitted to the Commissioners, they will, no doubt, adopt a similar course. The usual course is for the Land Commissioners to send the Papers to the Attorney General whenever they think there are grounds for a criminal prosecution. They have not done so in the present case. The Land Commissioners have not dealt with the suggestion with regard to laying Papers on the subject before Parliament. I shall make further inquiry on that point.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Here we have a statement by the Land Commissioners that this company are fraudulently returning bogus rents for the purpose of extracting the public money, and my question to the right hon. Gentleman is this: Are they so indifferent to the swindling of public money under the Ashbourne Act?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. and learned Gentleman is now putting a fresh question, and he is putting it in language in which it would not have been allowed to appear on the Paper.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I am sorry I made the observation to which the right hon. Gentleman objects, but it is extremely difficult to put the matter in proper language, so as to characterize what has been done by this London company in the terms it deserves. What the Commissioners themselves say is that—

"It appears that in the vast majority of these cases judicial rents have been fixed by the County Court Judge prior to the execution of the agreements, and that the original rents were in such cases inserted in the agreement as being the rents payable by the tenants, and that all information as to the existence of orders fixing the judicial rents was withheld from the Commissioners."

If that is not a fraud, I do not know what is. Do the Government think so lightly of this attempt on the part of the Drapers' Company to extract public money that they refuse to take any steps in the matter?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Is it not a fact that there has been a prosecution under the Arrears Act for a precisely analogous case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I have no information on the point raised by my hon. Friend. With regard to the question put to me by the hon. and learned Member for Longford, I have to say I have myself offered no judgment on the action of the company. As far as I understand the facts which appeared in the letter, the action of the agents of the company was extremely discreditable. Whether or not the Attorney General should prosecute is, of course, an entirely ulterior question, but I must entirely deny that the Government are indifferent to the matter. That the Government are not indifferent, however, does not in itself show that the Attorney General should direct a prosecution.

MR. T. M. HEALY: To-morrow I will ask the Government whether the Commissioners have forwarded the Papers to the Attorney General?

HER MAJESTY'S SHIP *SURPRISE*.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he can state the extent of the damage sustained by H.M.S. *Surprise*, arising out of the collision with the merchant steamer *Nesta* on Saturday last near Syracuse?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The only information at present received by the Admiralty as to the nature of the damages sustained by the *Surprise* is contained in the following telegram from Malta, dated the 28th inst.:—

"*Phaeton* arrived. *Surprise* requires renewal of cut-water, stem, hawse pipes, turtle back to 9 feet aft, and several plates under water; five weeks' work."

THE SEWERS RATE.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it is the case that the occupier is permitted by Statute to deduct the amount of the sewers rate in the Metropolis from his rent on paying his rent, unless a contract has been made to the contrary; whether, since by the Local Government Act of 1888 the sewers rate in the Metropolis is now merged in the rate levied by the London County Council, it is now impossible for the occupier to distinguish how much is charged for the sewers rate; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will take the necessary steps, by introduction of a Bill or otherwise, for obliging the amount of the sewers rate in the Metropolis to be specified, and for continuing the right of the occupier to deduct it.

*MR. RITCHIE: The rate which is now levied by the London County Council is in the nature of a county rate, and that rate is intended to cover the expenditure which was formerly provided for by the consolidated rate levied by the Metropolitan Board of Works. The old consolidated rate included the amounts which previously were levied under the title of sewers rate. No doubt, as regards the sewers rate, in the absence of any contract to the contrary, the tenant would be entitled to deduct from his rent the amount paid in respect of that rate. When the Local Government Bill was under consideration, my information was that the practice of providing in contracts for the payment of the sewers rate by the occupier was so universal that it was unnecessary to make any provision to meet these cases. Prior to

the notice of the question of the hon. Member, I had received no representations on the subject. If it should be found that, in fact, there are many cases in which a liability has been transferred from the owner to the occupier by reason of the levy of a county rate instead of a consolidated rate, I shall certainly be prepared to consider what course should be adopted with the view to providing a remedy.

IRELAND — DISTRICT INSPECTOR MARKHAM.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can now state the result of the inquiry into the question arising out of the Court Martial on District Inspector Markham?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Government cannot assent to a proposal which would form a precedent under which this House would be turned into a Court of Appeal for revising the decisions of departmental investigations into the conduct of members of the Constabulary Force. A practice of that kind would be subversive of discipline; and, so far as I know, would not be allowed in the case of the Army or the Navy.

MR. J. MORLEY: Then are we to rely on the reports in the *Derry Journal?* Do the Government object to our having the proper material with which to conduct discussion?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We certainly decline to lay the Papers on the Table. Evidence in some cases in the Army and Navy would not be laid on the Table, and I do not think it is right that different rules should come into operation in respect to the Constabulary.

Mr. J. MORLEY: In the case of Courts Martial in the Army are not full and verbatim reports published in the daily newspapers?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe they are occasionally.

MR. J. MORLEY: In the discussion which will arise on this matter will the right hon. Gentleman be able to quote from official reports?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If it is any consolation to the right hon. Gentleman I may state that there are no official shorthand notes of the proceedings in existence. There is no special inaccuracy in the notes published in the Press.

THE POSTAL FEMALE STAFF.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is now in position to give a reply to the Petition of the Female Staff (Established) of the Central Office presented to him in July, 1887?

*MR. RAIKES: The only point in the Petition on which a decision has not been given is that which relates to deductions from pay during absence on account of sickness. I have frequently stated in this House that that question is one which affects not merely the Telegraphists at the Central Telegraph Office, but also a large body of officers throughout the country. The question is now being carefully inquired into.

INSTRUCTIONS TO POLICE ATTENDING EVICTIONS.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether instructions have been given to the officers of Constabulary attending evictions in the county of Donegal, and in other parts of Ireland, to direct the police to effect entrance into the houses which have been built by the tenants without any assistance from the landlords, and to eject the occupants therefrom without first waiting for the execution of the ejectment decrees by the Sheriff; and whether it is his intention to allow this practice to be continued in Ireland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No such instructions have been issued to the police either in the county of Donegal or any other part of Ireland.

RECEIPTS FOR TELEGRAMS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that, if a receipt is required for a 6d. telegram, a fee of 2d. is demanded by the Telegraph Department; and, whether he will take steps to reduce this charge to 1d.?

*MR. RAIKES: I think that the fee mentioned by the hon. Member is certainly excessive in the case of 6d. telegrams, and I shall be glad if, after consulting the Treasury, I find myself able to reduce it.

MR. W. P. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.): Is the right hon Gentleman aware of the fact that the charge for a receipt for a telegram sent from the Continent is only 5 centimes or one halfpenny?

*MR. RAIKES: I am not informed on that point.

THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND POSTAL RATES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that the Manchester Official Local Postal Guide for May, which gives on page 26 the postage rate to countries not in the Postal Union, contains no reference to the reduced all-sea rate to Australia and New Zealand to 4d. per letter; and, whether he will take steps so that more ample and full notice is given to the public of the reduced rates of postage to Australia and New Zealand?

*MR. RAIKES: I have taken steps to have this omission remedied in the next issue of the Guide. The public have been fully informed of the reduced sea rate to Australasia by the usual official notices exhibited at the Post Offices throughout the country, as well as by means of the General Post Office Guide.

THE CASE OF W. FOWLER.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the case of William Fowler, aged 10, convicted at the late Assizes at Manchester of stealing 18 brass checks, value 1s. 6d. from the till of a public house, by order of his mother, and sentenced to one month's imprisonment and five years' detention in a reformatory; whether he has received an intimation from responsible parties that a suitable home will be found for the child; and, whether, having regard to the tender age of the child, and to the fact that he was acting in obedience to the instructions of his parents, he will rescind the sentence of imprisonment, and cancel the order of committal to a reformatory, if satisfied that the child will have proper care?

MR. MATTHEWS: The answer to the first two paragraphs is in the affirmative. I advised the remission of the sentence of imprisonment on the 23rd instant, and the boy was removed to the reformatory. I am now in communication with the Inspector as to whether this is a case in which the boy might properly be removed to a voluntary home, and I must await this Report before I can take any further action.

IRELAND—THE CASE OF YATES *v.* COLLINS.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the case of Yates *v.* Collins, stated by District Magistrates Gardiner and Segrave, argued before the Court of Exchequer on 23rd November, 1888, Lord Chief Baron Palles stated "that, in his opinion, there was no evidence sufficient upon which the Magistrates had authority to convict the defendants, and that if the case had been tried before him with a jury he would have felt it his duty to direct the jury that there was no evidence to convict, and that therefore, they should not convict"; whether Mr. Segrave was one of the Magistrates who did convict; whether his attention has been called to the statement of the Lord Chief Baron, "that looser evidence he never met," to the remarks of Mr. Justice Andrews, another member of the Court, who, though upholding the conviction, said that, "what conclusion he would have come to, or a jury would have come to, it was not for him to say"; and, whether the Government still continue to detain these men in prison for six months with hard labour, despite these expressions of opinion from these learned Judges, only because they do not memorialize for their release?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Having regard to the fact that the prisoners were convicted before two Resident Magistrates and that the conviction was affirmed by the Superior Court on appeal, the Government see no reason why the ordinary course should be departed from in this particular case.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Does he not think a strong expression from one Judge and an expression of doubt from another—there only being three Judges presiding—is some reason for the consideration of the matter by the Government, especially when the Resident Magistrate who convicted is one who is not considered worthy of being retained in the public service?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the right hon. Gentleman is mistaken. The Court of Appeal consisted of three Judges. One dissented from his colleagues, but it does not seem he thought the evidence was insufficient; on the contrary, he thought it sufficient.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Mr. Justice Andrews said that whether the conclusion he came to was the conclusion a jury would come to was not for him to say?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I am not at all sure of the expression. I have not had time to refer to it; but I am not sure that Mr. Justice Andrews confirmed the conviction.

BEHRING SEAS SEAL FISHERIES.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that the season is now approaching when sealing vessels enter Behring's Sea in pursuit of fur seals, Her Majesty's Government have arranged or can arrange some *modus vivendi* whereby, without prejudice to the claims advanced by the various parties interested, sealing may be fairly conducted for this season, steps being meanwhile taken to bring about, by mutual consent, a lasting settlement of the serious question now in dispute?

MR. GOURLEY: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is correct that the ironclad *Swiftsure* and other ships of the Pacific Squadron have been ordered to sail for the Behring Seas next month for the purpose of protecting British sealing vessels fishing in disputed waters from capture by United States ships of war; and whether the new British Minister at Washington has been instructed to bring the dispute to an amicable conclusion?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Her Majesty's Government are awaiting a Report on this subject from Her Majesty's Minister at Washington, who is fully conversant with it. I would answer the hon. Member for Sunderland with reference to Her Majesty's ships, in the negative.

MALTA—THE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state how many of the elected Members of the Council of Government in Malta have now resigned their seats on the Council; and, whether, in consequence of these resignations, a General Election will now be held under the Letters Patent of 12th December, 1887, as completed by the Letters Patent of 19th March, 1888?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that six of the elected Members have now resigned their seats. A General Election will not be held, but a partial election to fill the vacant seats will be held under the Letters Patent of 12th December, 1887.

THE NEW SCULPTURES IN WESTMINSTER HALL.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Penryn and Falmouth): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will be good enough to give to the House the name of the person employed by Mr. Pearson, R.A., to design and execute the heraldic sculptures lately placed on the pedestals of the new staircases in Westminster Hall?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, Dublin University): Mr. Pearson informs me that the person who is employed by him to model and execute the heraldic sculptures lately placed on the pedestals of the new staircases in Westminster Hall is Mr. Hitch, who is carrying out the work, not yet quite finished, under Mr. Pearson's supervision.

WAR OFFICE CONTRACTS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what further contract has recently been given to Colonel Wallace for valises; by when did the contract state they should be delivered; where must they be manufactured; and, whether the Director of Contracts has informed Colonel Wallace that the usual require-

ment as to doing the work in the contractor's own factory, with the object of preventing sub-contracting or sweating, is in his case open to modification?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): A contract has been recently given to Colonel Wallace for 4,000 valises, to be manufactured at his factory, 139, Dover Street, and to be delivered by the 12th of July next. The hands at this factory have struck; and Colonel Wallace has been told that, as the valises are wanted, he must submit for approval, if the strike lasts, the measures necessary to produce the article. I may add that the clause in the contract requiring that articles be made at a specified place is not universal, nor can it be insisted on if workmen should ever use it as a means of putting pressure on their employers. The object is to exclude middlemen; but there is no particular reason why work should not be given direct to outside hands.

MR. HANBURY: If work is given to outside hands will care be taken to see that the sub-contracting does not lead to sweating?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The measures to be taken by Colonel Wallace will be submitted to me for approval, and I shall certainly do everything in my power to prevent their being such as would lead to sweating.

THE HALIFAX AND BERMUDAS CABLE SUBSIDY.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow College): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether it is the fact that the Halifax and Bermudas Cable Company, Limited, to which the Treasury has sanctioned the transfer of the Government contract, subsidizing the proposed cable between Halifax (Nova Scotia) and Bermudas, was only registered at Somerset House on the 22nd inst., that its registered capital is only £50,000, and that the signatories to the Articles of Association consist of four clerks, one merchant, one accountant, and one "agent"; whether he is aware that, although the qualification of the directors is fixed at £500 nominal holding, Article 99 provides that they "may act before acquiring a qualification"; if he would state the date of the Treasury sanction to the transfer of the contract; and, if he can inform the House how much of the capital beyond the £35 represented by the signatures to the Articles of Association had actually been subscribed at the date of the transfer?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I am informed by the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies that the Halifax and Bermudas Cable Company, Limited, was duly registered on the 22nd inst. with a registered capital of £50,000. The descriptions of the seven signatories to the Memorandum are as stated—namely, four clerks, one merchant, one accountant, and one agent. The Articles of Association provide that the qualification of every director, other than the first directors, shall be the holding in his own right of shares or stock of the nominal value of £500; and, further, that a director may act before acquiring his qualification. It is quite competent, the Registrar adds, for a company to draw its Articles in this form if it thinks fit. A provisional and conditional approval of the transfer of the contract to this new company from the International Company was given on the 13th inst. I do not know the amount of capital subscribed, but I am informed that over £100,000 of debentures have been offered to the public and have been fully subscribed.

DR. CAMERON: The hon. Member speaks of the transfer having been conditionally sanctioned on the 13th inst. Was it given before the formation of the company, the company only having been registered, as he says, on the 22nd inst?

MR. JACKSON: The transfer was provisionally sanctioned before the formation of the new company. Under the Agreement sanctioned by the House there was power to assent to a transfer to another company.

DR. CAMERON: No specific company was mentioned in the conditional sanction.

MR. JACKSON: It would necessarily be given to the company with whom the contract was made.

DR. CAMERON: Will the hon. Member promise to look into the matter before he makes the conditional sanction an actual and positive one?

MR. JACKSON: Yes, I can promise that before the transaction is finally ratified all the conditions shall be complied with.

IRELAND—UNION HOSPITALS AND CLINICAL INSTRUCTION.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, South): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, whether he will grant a return of the Correspondence and Memorials, with reference to the opening of union hospitals for clinical instruction, addressed to the Privy Council, on behalf of a number of Irish provincial physicians, complaining of the conduct of the General Medical Council and of the Royal University of Ireland, and also a Return of the Correspondence thereon which passed between the Privy Council and the Medical Council?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (SIR W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): I have made inquiries both here and in Dublin, and can find no record of the correspondence referred to.

HOME OFFICE CONTRACTS—NEW POLICE CENTRAL OFFICES.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it is true that Messrs. Grover and Sons, the contractors for the new Police Central Offices, have sub-let portions of the work to other firms; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take to prevent a continuance of this practice?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have consulted the Office of Works on this subject, and am advised by them that the arrangements made by Messrs. Grover and Sons do not amount to sub-letting of the work. I am, however, making further inquiries into the subject.

WORKMEN IN WOOLWICH DOCKYARD.

MR. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether two workmen employed in the collar makers' shop in Woolwich Dockyard were promoted over the heads of their seniors; whether it is a fact that Captain Horton, Inspector of Saddlery, subsequently told the workmen in the shop that "some of you may not like what is being done here, but you will have to bottle it;" and, whether one of the men promoted passed work and material into the stores which had been condemned at the Judge Advocate General's inquiry?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Any men passed over in recent promotions were so passed over because of inferior work. Captain Horton denies that he used the words imputed to him. I have not yet received a Report on the third point; but I may say that promotions are made with reference to efficiency generally.

IRELAND—PUBLIC MEETINGS IN LEINSTER LAWN, DUBLIN.

MR. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether any objection will be raised to the holding of a meeting in the Leinster Lawn, Dublin, to advertise the fact that, though the gates opening on the public thoroughfares are always kept locked, there is a right of access to the public through a wicket in a side railing which is not generally known?

MR. JACKSON: I hope it will not be necessary for the hon. Gentleman to go to the trouble of holding a meeting, because arrangements are being made to give very clear notice of the part to which the question alludes. The side gate on the opposite side of the Lawn will also be opened for the admission of the public.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY (Lancashire, N., Blackpool): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, if he is now able to state when he will introduce the promised Bill to carry out certain recommendations of the Royal Commission on Civil Service Establishments; and, whether he will also lay upon the Table the Treasury Minute or Order in Council for effecting those other alterations in the conditions of the Civil Service which have been suggested by the Commission and adopted by the Government?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The two Reports of the Royal Commission over which my hon. Friend presides with such ability have been receiving that careful consideration from Her Majesty's Government which the importance of the subjects dealt with merits, and the Treasury Minutes dealing with the matter will be laid on the Table very shortly after the Whitsuntide recess, and at the same time the Go-

vernment hope to introduce the Bill amending the Superannuation Acts.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE BILL.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, taking into consideration the importance attached by the agricultural interest to progress being made with the Board of Agriculture Bill, he will arrange to take the Second Reading before the Whitsuntide recess?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: My hon. Friend will doubtless remember the answer I gave on Friday to my hon. Friend the Member for Faversham, that the Government hoped to be able to take the Second Reading of Board of Agriculture Bill before the House rises for Whitsuntide.

INDIA—GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS—OASTLER & PALMER.

MR. JAMES ROWLANDS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what orders have been given out from Government Departments, including the Indian Office and Metropolitan Police, to Oastler & Palmer; whether it is a fact that Oastler & Palmer, of the Grange Mills, Bermondsey, were, up to December last, partners in the firm of Ross & Co., who were struck off the list of contractors; whether he is aware that Oastler & Palmer do not manufacture accoutrements, but are solely tanners, curriers, and leather merchants; and whether he can state who manufactured the acticles recently supplied to the Metropolitan Police?

*MR. MATTHEWS: Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to answer the question. I am informed by the Receiver of Metropolitan Police that no orders have been given by him to Oastler & Palmer. The Receiver has no knowledge that these gentlemen are connected with the firm of Ross & Co. There was a contract between the Receiver and Messrs. Ross & Co. in force at the time when the Secretary of State for War decided against inviting that firm to tender; and under that contract waistbelts and accoutrements have been supplied to the Police. These goods have been always passed by the War Office examiners before being taken to by the Police.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: Have not contracts been given out to this firm from other Departments?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It is impossible for one Member of the Government to answer for the whole of the Government. If the hon. Member will put his question to individual Members of the Government each will answer for his own Department.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: Various questions have been asked of various Departments from time to time, but it has been thought desirable to get, if possible, a general statement on the whole question. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman if questions have not been asked on both sides of the House in regard to the fact that since the firm I speak of were struck off the list of contractors they have supplied goods to the Government under other names?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am aware that such questions have been asked on both sides of the House, and also that they have invariably been completely answered by the representatives of the particular Departments. The Government are most anxious to give to every hon. Member who desires it full information on every question which can be legitimately answered, but to ask whether any Government Department has at any time ever given an order to Messrs. Ross & Co. is more than I could satisfactorily answer to the House.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: I do not ask as to "any" time. I desire to know whether any contracts are now given to Messrs. Ross & Co.? If this question is not answerrd I beg to give notice that I will raise the whole matter in Supply.

TOWN COUNCILLORS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Town Councillors (Scotland) Bill, which has been on the Orders of the Day since 16th April (adjourned discussion on Second Reading), to which the assent of the Scotch Department has been obtained to the Second Reading through the Lord Advocate, has been persistently blocked by the hon. Member for Camberwell, although no Amendment has been proposed; whether he is aware

that Petitions have been presented to this House from all the principal towns in Scotland in favour of said Bill, and none against it; and, whether, in the exceptional circumstances, Her Majesty's Government intend to give any facilities to pass the Bill, or make such alteration in the rules and forms of the House as will make Scotch business possible?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am afraid that in the present state of public business I cannot promise facilities for the consideration of this Bill.

ARMAMENTS ON THE CONTINENT.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if Her Majesty's Government have recently made any proposals to the Governments of the Continental States to bring about a material and prompt reduction of warlike armaments, and with what result; and, if not, whether they will without loss of time enter into such negotiations, with a view to lessen the burden of Military expenditure and the dangers which now threaten the peace of Europe?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: If any favourable opportunity present itself, Her Majesty's Government will be most glad to avail themselves of it to use their influence in the direction the hon. Gentleman refers to; but he must be aware that to interfere in matters of that kind is frequently to defeat, rather than forward the object which the hon. Gentleman would wish to attain. I can assure him that Her Majesty's Government are as deeply sensible as he is, and they have often expressed that view in this House, that the present state of the armaments of Europe is a great misfortune to Europe and a danger to the peace of the world.

CIVIL ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. JOHN KELLY (Camberwell, North): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in giving effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments, he will consider the desirability of an Order in Council upon that subject being dated back to 20th December last, the date at which the system of duty was practically abolished?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not think it desirable to anticipate the conclusions at which Her Majesty's Government may arrive.

EGYPTIAN REVENUES.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government were consulted regarding, or took part in, an arrangement by which the Octroi of Cairo and other revenues were specially pledged for the last Egyptian Loan to provide for the money payable to the Ex-Khedive, or by what authority that was done; whether the Egyptian Government has an unexhausted power to borrow, and for how much; by whom that authority was given, and whether it received the special sanction of the Powers; and, whether, in view of the insanitary condition of Cairo and other Egyptian towns owing to the want of municipal revenue, Her Majesty's Government consents to the proposal, stated to be now made, again specifically to pledge away the local Octroi revenues for a general loan?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Her Majesty's Government were not consulted as to the details of the Egyptian Loan of 1888. These were arranged between the Egyptian Government and the Commissioners of the Caisse de la Dette Publique. The Sultan's firman of 1888 sanctioned an increase of the Egyptian Debt by £E5,000,000, a large portion of which was to be devoted to public works and commutation of pensions. The amount issued in 1888 under this firman was £E2,330,000. The Egyptian Government have also under the Law of Liquidation and the Declaration signed in London on March 17th, 1885, the power of obtaining advances on current account up to a maximum of £E1,000,000. As I informed the hon. Member on the 23rd inst., I am not in a position to make any statement in regard to the details of the Egyptian conversion scheme.

THE EDUCATION CODE, 1889.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether Article 100a. vi. contemplates a separate classification for each of the elementary subjects, so that it would be possible for a scholar to be placed say in Standard IV. for arithmetic, Standard V. for writing, and Standard VI. for reading; and, if it

does, whether the adoption of any such classification will be at the option of the schoolmaster?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: My hon. Friend has rightly described the object contemplated by the provision in the Code to which he refers. It would, no doubt, be at the discretion of the teacher to adopt the classification described or not, according to the number of scholars it might benefit.

EMPLOYMENT OF EUROPEANS IN NATIVE INDIAN STATES.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Secretary of State is aware that by Article 6 of Treaty XLII., 1st September, 1798, made with the Nizam of Hyderabad, it is agreed,

"... nor shall any European whatever be admitted into the service of this State, nor be permitted to remain within its territories, without the knowledge and consent of the Company's Government,"

and whether he is aware that by Treaties made with the Ruler of Herat, 1839, with the Maharajah Holkar in 1808 and 1818, with the Rajah of Sikkim in 1817, and in other Treaties, a similar engagement is entered into with 23 other States or Princes; whether, in view of these Treaty arrangements, and that all appointments of Europeans in Native Indian States are (or should be) reported to the Government of India, he will direct that the provisions of the Treatise shall be observed, and that such an incident as the appointment in the Rampur State of a European on a salary of Rs. 1,800 per month, with a large establishment, to do work hitherto done by an Indian official on Rs. 100 per month, with slight clerical assistance, may be brought under the cognizance of the Government; and, whether he will direct that a special inquiry be made into the Rampur appointment?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The Secretary of State is aware of the provisions of the Treatise with the native Princes providing that no European shall enter the employment or remain in the territory of a native State without the permission of the British Government, and he has no reason to suppose that they are overlooked by the Government of India. He does not see the necessity for a special inquiry into the Rampur appointment.

IRELAND—CONDUCT OF THE POLICE AT BALLYGAR, COUNTY GALWAY.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, b what authority the police in Ballygar, County Galway, acted on Thursday night last in charging the people, and striking them with their rifles, when the inhabitants were engaged in celebrating the release of the honourable Member for North East Cork; whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into all the circumstances?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that the alleged charge has no foundation in fact.

MR. HAYDEN: May I ask from whom the right hon. Gentleman gets his information?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: From the usual sources of information.

CONDUCT OF THE POLICE AT FALSK, COUNTY ROSCOMMON.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland by whose directions a hut which her neighbours were erecting for the shelter of an evicted tenant near Falsk, County Roscommon, was demolished by the Constabulary?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that on the occasion in question a disorderly crowd of some 150 persons, among whom were the principal officers of the local branch of the National League, assembled for the purpose of intimidating a tenant who had taken a farm from which the previous tenant had been evicted, and in dispersing this crowd some portions of the hut in course of erection were thrown down by the police.

VACCINE LYMPH.

DR. FITZGERALD (Longford, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing the number of persons who have been vaccinated in the United Kingdom in the year 1888 from human lymph; the number who have been vaccinated from calf lymph; and, what is the cost to the Government in each case?

*Mr. RITCHIE: I am unable to lay upon the Table of the House a Return such as that suggested. The certificates of successful vaccination registered by the Vaccination Officers do not show whether human or calf lymph was used for the vaccination. Moreover, a large proportion of the vaccinations in England are performed by private medical practitioners. The vaccinations in England are about three-quarters of a million annually, and of those about one-third are by private practitioners. The number of vaccinations performed with calf lymph at the Local Government Board Station at Lamb's Conduit Street, London, was in 1888, 6,950. Humanized lymph was sent out from the Board's National Vaccine Establishment in the same year to 7,111 applicants, and calf lymph to 3,094. The estimated expenditure for the current year in connection with the Vaccine Establishment in £3,734.

DR. FITZGERALD: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, why he has not appointed upon the Royal Commission on Vaccination any supporter of vaccination by the process of calf lymph?

*Mr. RITCHIE: I have appointed to the Commission several Medical men who, I think, have the confidence of the Medical community, but it did not seem to me requisite to inquire whether any of them were in favour of using calf lymph.

IRELAND—CAHERMORE EVICTIONS.

MR. M'CARTON (on behalf of Mr. PINKERTON, Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if he is aware that 18 persons were summoned to appear at Kinvarra Petty Sessions (county Galway) on the 15th May last, charged with being present at the eviction of a number of tenants upon the Cahermore property of Mr. Alexander, among whom were men of over 60 years and Bartly Hall, junior, a boy of nine; if there was any resistance on the part of the tenants, and if a number of those charged formed part of the families evicted; has his attention been called to the fact that an adjournment was granted, owing to the landlord failing to produce the original decrees; that since that time summonses against nine of them have been withdrawn; and that James Hall, son of the evicted tenants, has since been summoned instead of his brother Bartly Hall; whether the sole attempt at riot consisted in some one outside the police cordon throwing a stone; and, if so, will compensation be given to the men unjustly charged, who have been put to considerable trouble and expense; if Mr. Alexander, solicitor of Gort, is furnished with a strong police force as bodyguard, although he has never been threatened or intimidated in any way; whether he is aware that his tenant offered to settle upon fair terms, which he refused; and, what is the amount of expense entailed upon the country by his doing so?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary Authorities report that 19 persons were summoned, not for being present at the evictions of the three tenants, but, for forming part of a riotous and unlawful assembly during those evictions. One of the persons summoned is over 60 years of age; the remainder range from 20 to 50. The summons issued against Bartly Hall, junior, a boy not 9 years of age, but about 13, was, as I have already stated, intended for his brother. The mistake has since been remedied, and his brother summoned. The tenants did not themselves resist eviction Two of the persons charged were of the families evicted. An adjournment was granted owing to the landlord, who is a very old man, having forgotten to bring with him the warrants. The nine original summonses were withdrawn and amended ones substituted. The riot did not consist of the incident mentioned in the fourth paragraph. Mr. Alexander has not, so far, been furnished with a strong police bodyguard. It is not the case that he has never been threatened, and it appears considerable intimidation has been used towards him. In not one of the three cases does the tenant appear to have offered fair terms.

MALTA HARBOUR.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to an article in the *British Medical Journal* for 18th May, in which Malta Harbour is described as "being little better than a cesspool;" whether the painful and disabling disorder known as "Malta fever" is very

common at that station, but whereas its frequency among the troops has been materially lessened by sanitary improvements, the Navy still suffers severely, the article going on to say that "the seamen of the Fleet exposed to the emanations from the harbour suffer from fever almost as much as if stationed on the Gold Coast;" and, whether, in the view of these facts, he will cause inquiries to be made in order to rectify such grave sanitary evils?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Malta Harbour in common with all practically tideless, confined harbours in sub-tropical climates, more especially if surrounded by a dense population or frequented by much shipping, is comparatively unhealthy as an anchorage. Every effort has, however, been made to render it as healthy as possible, and recent sanitary improvements in the town and suburbs of Malta have been carried out, including a pure water supply, and a well-arranged system of sewers discharging into the sea at a considerable distance from the harbour. These works have already had a beneficial effect on the sanitary condition of the port, as shown by the returns of sickness from ships stationed in or frequenting it. The Commanders-in Chief of late years have endeavoured to communicate little with Malta Harbour during the summer months, which are considered the most unhealthy part of the year. The comparison of Malta Harbour with the Gold Coast, as a fever-producing locality, is unsupported by evidence, and, however disabling the so-called Malta fever may be, it is characterized by a remarkably low mortality.

IRELAND—THE OLPHERT ESTATE.

MR. THEODORE FRY (Darlington): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he had received any report from Mr. Tuke as to the condition of the tenancy on the Olphert estate; and, if so, if he will lay a copy of the same upon the Table of the Hosue; and, if the report was only a verbal one, will he give the substance of the same?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. Tuke went to Donegal as a private individual, and I apprehend that he has made, or will make, public, through the medium of the Press, such of the results of his observations there as he may desire to publish.

MR. T. FRY: Are we to understand that Mr. Tuke did not go in any respect at the request of the Irish Office?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: He went to Donegal as a private individual, and in no sense as an official of the Government.

MR. T. FRY: We know that Mr. Tuke went as a private individual, but at the same time we have very good reason to know why he went.

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Tuke has reported that the great bulk of the tenants on the Olphert estate were unable to pay their rents; whether it is the fact that the terms offered by Mr. Olphert to the tenants on the estate were not made till after the issuing of eviction decrees and on the eve of the actual carrying out of the evictions; whether, although eviction decrees were obtained against 200 tenants, 19 tenants only have been evicted; and, whether he can explain why so small a number of the tenants against whom decrees were obtained have actually been evicted?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. Tuke has not made any Report on the subject at all, and has acted throughout, as I have already said, as a private individual. I understand that certain terms were offered by Mr. Olphert to all the tenants on the estate prior to the issue of eviction decrees, and prior to their adoption of the Plan of Campaign. There was also shown a special consideration to a certain number of the poorest of the tenants by the offer of the landlord to accept a small part of the arrears due if paid before July 1. The offer was made after the issuing of the decrees, but before the last evictions commenced. I believe more eviction decrees were obtained than were acted upon, but it is not my business to furnish any explanations of a decision come to by the landlord on his own responsibility.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Were not the terms referred to as offered so long ago as December, 1888? Has not Mr. Olphert, according to his sworn statement, made no further offer?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: May I ask whether, so far from Mr. Tuke having reported that the great bulk

of the tenants were not able to pay their rent, he has distinctly written in the public newspapers that there is no exceptional distress in the district?

MR. MAC NEILL: May I ask whether Mr. Tuke, in his first letter to the *Times*, did not carefully exclude all mention of the Olphert estate, and state that he had done so deliberately?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that Mr. Tuke has carefully abstained from entering into the controversies on the Olphert estate, but I understand his Report refers to that part of the county, and that the general tenour of the Report is in accordance with the statement made by the hon. Member for South Tyrone. The second offer made by Mr. Olphert to his tenants was subsequent to the time mentioned by the hon. Member for Camborne.

MR. CONYBEARE: I refer to Mr. Olphert's answers to questions put by myself during the trial only a few days ago. It was then stated that Mr. Olphert had made no further offer since December, 1888.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My information is that the offer was made subsequently.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Wybrant Olphert, the landlord at whose instance evictions were, with the aid of the forces of the Crown, carried out in Falcarragh on Friday and Monday last, is the same Mr. Wybrant Olphert who gave the following evidence before a Select Committee of this House, appointed in 1858, to inquire into the destitution alleged to exist in Gweedore and Cloughaneely:—

"Question 4827. Sir Edmund Hayes: You deprived no tenants of any mountain, except in the townland of Kildrum?—Just so.

"4828. In the townland of Kildrum you took 2,000 acres into your own hands because you thought, and knew, I suppose, that the tenants had not sufficiently stock to stock it?—Just so; and I thought that I might as well make a grazing farm of it, and make some use of it, as have it lying waste.

"4829. That 2,000 acres was subsequently let to one of the Scotchmen?—Yes."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think it part of my business to investigate matters which have no connection with the duties of my office, and with regard to which every hon. Member has as good means of information as myself. My recollection of the Report of the Committee to which the hon. Member refers is that it supplies a complete refutation of calumnies uttered against certain Donegal landlords in the year 1858, and an equally satisfactory exposure of the utterly erroneous character of the allegations freely made by priests and others at that time into the distress alleged to exist in the neighbourhood of Gweedore.

MR. M. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): Is it not the case that on this Committee of 30 years ago there was only one Irish Member, and he dissented from the Report of the Committee?

No answer was returned.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland why, having regard to the circumstances of the Olphert estate, have the applications of 82 tenants on that estate to the Land Commissioners for the fixing of a fair rent, and which were received by the Land Commissioners before the 1st November 1887, not yet been heard; when will a Land Commission Court sit for the hearing of these applications; and what has been the reason for the delay in bringing matters in dispute between Mr. Olphert and his tenants to a judicial decision?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that all cases from the Olphert estate received before December, 1887, appear on the list which was issued on the 13th instant, and will shortly be heard. The Chairman of the Sub-Commission has notified to the Commissioners that he hopes to begin the hearing of these cases on the 19th of June. There has been no delay that could be avoided.

COUNTY DOWN LAND COMMISSION.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of originating notices to fix fair rents in respect of present tenancies, and also in respect of leaseholds, served on the Land Commission from the county of Down before 1st November, 1887, and which still remain undisposed of; and whether he will give the number of eviction notices served on the Clerk of the Peace for the county of Down since 1st January, 1888?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners report that 1,106 applications received in respect of present tenancies in the county Down, and 135 applications in respect of leasehold tenancies, have not yet been listed for hearing. As already explained, a Sub-Commission has been sitting continuously in the county during the past eight months. The total number of eviction notices lodged in the office of the Clerk of the Crown and Peace from January 1, 1888, to the present time is 221.

THE DUNGARVON GUARDIANS.

MR. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when an election of Poor Law Guardians for the Dungarvon Union is to take place?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Local Government Board do not purpose to order an election during the present year, in view of the circumstances under which the late Board of Guardians was dissolved.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION—THE PRISONER THOMAS TRACEY.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the prisoner Thomas Tracey, who was brought from Belfast Gaol to Millbank Prison as a witness for the *Times* at the Royal Commission, and who, after having been kept there several months, was sent back to Belfast Gaol without having been produced at the Commission; whether Tracey had been a deserter from the Army, and was promised by the police at Castlebar that his desertion would be condoned if he consented to give the evidence required on behalf of the *Times*; whether Tracey applied several times to the General Prisons Board for permission to see a solicitor without the presence of a warder; whether several such interviews were granted to Head Constable Preston and other Constabulary officers in the prison of Castlebar, Belfast, and Millbank; and whether, considering the serious allegations made by Tracey against the conduct of the police at these interviews, he will now allow him to see a solicitor without the presence of a warder?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is quite correct that Tracey had been a deserter from the Army, and when first committed to prison in August, 1887, he wrote to the Adjutant of the Connaught Rangers admitting desertion from that regiment under name of Thomas Casey. The Military Authorities thereupon made inquiry, and on September 24, 1887, discharged Tracey, he having been committed by the civil power as a person of ill-fame. It is entirely unfounded that the police at Castlebar promised him that his desertion would be condoned if he consented to given evidence on behalf of the *Times*. It appears that the Prisons Board received applications from a firm of solicitors in Belfast asking, on behalf of Tracey, for a private interview with him, but the Governor of the gaol having reported that there was no case pending in which the prisoner required legal assistance, the permission asked for could not be granted. There is no reason why the ordinary rules of the prison should be departed from in this case.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin, Co.): Has the Governor of a prison discretion to refuse any application to see a prisoner?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I presume he has; but if the hon. Gentleman will give notice, I will give a specific answer.

THE TRIAL OF MR. HARRISON.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the following passage from a letter written by the hon. Member for the Camborne Division, and read at the annual meeting of the National Reform Union on Wednesday last, and published in the *Manchester Examiner* of last Thursday:—

"I have evidence to prove that the Attorney General for Ireland recently stated that he had sent down orders to the Magistrates who tried me at Falcarragh that they were in no case to convict Mr. Harrison."

And, is there any foundation for this statement; and, if so, will he lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the Correspondence between the Executive Government and the Resident Magistrates who tried Mr. Harrison?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have paid no attention to the letter referred to. The Attorney General for Ireland did not make the statement attributed to him. There are no Papers to lay on the Table.

MR. CONYBEARE: As this question refers to me, perhaps I may be allowed to state the facts of the case so far as I know them. As to my statement, it was a statement made to me by my co-conspirator Mr. Harrison, that in the presence of a relative of his, this question was asked of one of the highest legal authorities of the Irish Government: "What are you going to do with young Harrison?" To which the high legal authority made this reply "We have long ago sent down orders for his acquittal." I assume that the Attorney General for Ireland is the high legal authority referred to, but it may have been the learned Solicitor General, or if not these, I presume it must have been Lord Ashbourne himself. In any case the reply points to there having been a conspiracy in the matter, and I challenge the Chief Secretary to give Mr. Harrison and myself tho opportunity of testing the truth of our statement.

MR. MAC NEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Mr. Harrison in my presence publicly made the same statement?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I daresay that Mr. Harrison did. As far as I can see, this story goes through the hands of three persons. There is the original relative of Mr. Harrison, there is Mr. Harrison, and there is the hon. Member for the Camborne Division. Which made the blunder I cannot say, but all I know is that there was a blunder.

RICHMOND PRISON (DUBLIN.)

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Richmond Prison, Dublin, was erected at the cost, and of the use of the city of Dublin; what was the total charge upon the exchequer of the city in respect of the prison; under what circumstances the building has been taken out of the possession and control of the city authorities, and to what purpose it is now applied; and, whether compensation will be made to the city for the appropriation of its property?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Richmond Prison being no longer required as a prison has been appropriated as a military barrack under the provisions of the Prisons (Ireland) Act of 1877. The statute makes no provision for direct compensation in such cases.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): My hon. Friend and myself have Amendments on the paper with reference to the Scottish Bill to which we attach importance. We shall be precluded from putting the Amendments unless the Bills are submitted to a Committee of the whole House; and there had been a rumour that the Bills might be remitted to a Special Committee. I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what the Government propose should be the next stage of the Bills after the Second Reading?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government propose that the Local Government (Scotland) Bill, which is the first on the Paper, shall be considered in Committee of the whole House. It is proposed to refer No. 2 Bill to a Standing Committee with 15 Scottish Members added to it.

MR. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): I give notice of opposition to that course with regard to the Second Bill. It is entirely distasteful to Scotch Members on this side of the House.

CHARGES AGAINST VICE-CONSUL WARBURTON.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The hon. Member for Fermanagh has given notice of a question reflecting on the character of a public officer, but he has not attended to ask it.

MR. M. J. KENNY: I was about to ask it.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I will answer the question, which is as follows:—

"Whether the attention of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has been called to serious complaints of bad conduct against British Vice-Consul Warburton at Newport, U. S. A.; and whether he would inquire into the truth of those charges?"

Certain complaints against Colonel Warburton made by residents at Newport, U. S. A., were forwarded last year by the Government of the United States. They were investigated on the spot by Mr. Edwardes, Secretary of the British Legation, who reported that the charges had completely broken down. The United States Secretary of State, to

whom Mr. Edwardes's report was communicated, withdrew the complaints, stating that he was satisfied that Colonel Warburton was exonerated.

Mr. SEXTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a recent copy of the *Newport News* contains a report of the trial of an action for libel brought by Colonel Warburton against that paper? And is he aware that it was proved in that trial that Colonel Warburton was in the habit of going about the town in a nude or semi-nude condition?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! questions affecting the character of individuals should be put on the Paper, in order that a Member may have due opportunity to answer.

MR. SEXTON: Can the right hon. Gentleman state what was the issue of this trial?

*MR. SPEAKER: It is preferable to have such questions put on the Paper, that the answer may be in specific terms.

MR. M. J. KENNY: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, as a matter of fact, his reply is not addressed to the charge mentioned in the question but to charges that were made previously, and not alluded to in the question at all?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I have no knowledge of any other complaints against Colonel Warburton.

MR. SEXTON: I shall put a further question on the subject.

IRELAND—DUBLIN CITY POLICE FORCE.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, what amount was levied by rate on the city of Dublin during the last financial year in aid of the maintenance of the City Police Force, and how much under each of the several heads of Revenue locally raised was applied to the same purpose; and, whether the Government contemplate making any proposal to give the local authority any participation in the control and management of the police force so maintained in part by local contributions.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that the respective amounts of the rates levied for the Dublin police during the last year were as follows:—Police rate, £34,200; hackney carriage licenses, £6,700; pawnbrokers and other licenses, £6,100; police-court fines, £6,900. The total local income, amounting to £54,000, was met by an Exchequer grant of £90,000. No change in the law is contemplated at present.

MR. SEXTON: Will the management of the Dublin Police Force form any part of the subjects for consideration in relation to a Local Government Bill in Ireland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It would be premature now to deal with the contents of any Bill relating to Irish local government.

THE DRAPERS' COMPANY ESTATE.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can inform the House of the reasons which obliged the Irish Land Purchase Commissioners to refuse to sanction the proposed sale by the Drapers' Company of their Irish estate to their tenants; and, whether it may be understood that no further proposal of the kind on the part of this company will be entertained until the House has had an opportunity of expressing its opinion upon the attempted transaction?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I answered this question in replying to an earlier question on the subject, in which I showed that the Commissioners are perfectly alive to the character of the transfer, and no doubt the same considerations will influence them in regard to any further proposal.

THE WELSH SUNDAY CLOSING ACT.

MR. A. WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.): There was one paragraph in my question in regard to the Commission on the Welsh Sunday Closing Act the Home Secretary appears to have overlooked. May I draw his attention to it now—

"Whether, when it was decided to place County Court Judges on the Commission, any Welsh speaking County Court Judge was asked to serve?"

MR. MATTHEWS: I certainly had intended to include that in the general answer. The hon. Member seems to entertain great curiosity on the subject, but it does not occur to me that the accomplishment of speaking Welsh is an essential one for the Commissioners. I do not know any County Court Judge

in Wales who speaks Welsh with fluency.

MR. A. WILLIAMS: Perhaps I may be allowed to bring to the notice of the right hon. Gentleman the fact that some of these Judges do speak Welsh, and I may also mention that Mr. Gwynne Williams, the County Court Judge for Glamorganshire, not only speaks Welsh, but is an accomplished Welsh scholar, and that he commands the confidence of all the Welsh people.

MR. MATTHEWS: I heartily wish that it had fallen to the lot of the hon. Member instead of myself to select the members of this Commission. I have done my best to satisfy the public, and if I have failed to satisfy the hon. Member I can only regret it.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state to the House what business the Government propose to take to-morrow and also on Monday, and also if the Irish Drainage Bills are not introduced to-night when it is proposed to take them?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I hope we may assume that the Debate on the Local Government Bill and the Motion which stands in the name of the hon. Member for Leith will be disposed of this evening; and I should hope in sufficient time to enable my right hon. Friend to introduce his Bills. If this is impossible, however, he will introduce them to-morrow after Supply, from which we shall break off early enough for the purpose. On Monday we shall take Supply, and, if possible, I hope the Board of Agriculture Bill will be read a second time, as well as the Lunacy Bill. That Bill we propose to refer to a Standing Committee, which I think meets with the general acceptance of the House.

MR. MARJORIBANKS: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow the Scotch Fishery Boards Vote to be postponed until the report of the Board for last year is in the hands of hon. Members?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: That is a most unusual course to take. I will consider whether there is any precedent for it, and if there is, I will see if it is possible to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman. It is very undesirable to postpone votes, because that course often results in preventing any adequate discussion of them by those most interested.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): Is it the intention to refer the Local Government (Scotland) Bill, No. 2, to one of the existing Standing Committees with the addition of 15 Scottish Members. If so, which of the Committees is it to be referred to?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The No. 2 Bill in the ordinary course would go to the Standing Committee on Law as it exists now, and the Scottish Members will be added.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): With reference to the answer to question No. 5, may I ask whether we are to understand that the Home Secretary absolutely declines to take any action against the license now enjoyed by reckless drivers.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The House has agreed that when questions have been twice gone over, it is inconvenient to ask further supplementary questions.

SIR L. PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): I learn that a deputation has been received by the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject of Bi-metallism, and I should like to know whether any change will in consequence take place with regard to the arrangements for the discussion of the important resolution on the paper for Tuesday next. Or is the Resolution to be disposed of in the four-hours sitting?

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I am very sensible of the unanimous desire in many parts of the House that there should be an adequate discussion of this question, and I would ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is not possible to make arrangements for devoting a whole day to the subject instead of merely an evening sitting.

MR. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I wish to express my concurrence in a very decided form with the request made to the right hon. Gentleman. It is quite hopeless to make effectual progress with a question of such complicity in the hours at the disposal of the House on Tuesday.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: There is only one way of meeting the views of the right hon. Gentleman, that is by meeting

at 3 instead of 2 on Tuesday and taking the adjournment at the beginning of business. That would perhaps suit the views of the right hon. Gentleman. [Mr. GLADSTONE signified dissent.] Perhaps it would be better not to come to a decision on the matter yet; however, I will leave it open for further consideration on the part of hon. Members. But looking at the stress of the present condition of public business, I do not think that I am in a position to offer a larger amount of public time.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury whether I may understand that no Irish Estimates will be taken before the Whitsuntide adjournment, and whether the right hon. Gentleman will consent not to take any of the Irish Estimates during the first two sittings of the House—that is before Monday, the 17th of June?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: If it is the desire of the right hon. Gentleman that no Irish business should be taken before Monday the 17th of June, I will undertake that that will be the case on the reassembling of the House, we propose to take the Army Estimates.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): Will no Civil Service Estimates be taken on the Thursday on which the House re-assembles?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Only the Army and possibly the Navy Estimates will be taken on the Thursday.

MERCHANT SHIPPING, 1888.

Copy ordered, "of Tables showing the Progress of British Merchant Shipping."—(*Sir Michael Hicks Beach.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 176.]

OFFICIAL SECRETS (EXPENSES) BILL. (No. 187.)

Committee to consider of authorizing the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, out of the expenses of the prosecution in Scotland or Ireland of a misdemeanour under any Act of the present Session to prevent the disclosure of Official Documents and Information (Queen's Recommendation signified), Two-morrow, at Two of the clock.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL. No. (187.)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [24th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): It may be thought by some hon. Members that a burgh Representative has not the same interest in the discussion of this Bill as a county Member. In my own individual case, however, I happen to have considerable experience in reference to the local management of counties in Scotland, and I am able to speak from that experience with regard to the proposals of this Bill. As a rule, up to the present, we on this side of the House have had no reason to complain of the course that Her Majesty's Government have taken on questions of general policy. They have merely given effect to Liberal principles in the legislation they have carried through this House. The English Local Government Bill was conceived in the most Liberal spirit—so Liberal indeed, that it bore contrast with any similar measure which any Liberal Government had previously conceived. It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that, because that was so, it was a Bill which could be applied to Scotland. In England the majority of the people belong to the Conservative Party, and therefore the Local Government Bill necessarily partakes of a Conservative character. Again, the people of England have not had the experience of Local Government which is possessed by the people of Scotland. It would be a mistake, therefore, to say that because a Bill is applicable to England it is also applicable to Scotland. In Scotland most of the people are Liberals; every populous place has its own burgh management. You have Road Trustee Boards, you have Parochial Board management, and School Board management. We have already in Scotland a measure of Local Government which is unsurpassed in any part of this kingdom or in any other kingdom in the world. We have in Scotland two forms of government. The Town Councils and School

Boards are purely elected bodies, whilst the Parochial Boards and Road Trustee Boards are only partly elected. It is a remarkable circumstance that the only Boards which command any confidence in Scotland are those which are purely elected, and I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Lord Advocate to say whether he, or anyone else, has the smallest fault to find with those bodies. The partly elected Boards command no confidence whatever in the country. The ratepayers take no interest whatever in the elections to those bodies, and only half-a-dozen people or so care to turn out to take part in them, simply because the representatives of the electors on the Boards are out-numbered by those who have no electoral qualification. We can, therefore, see that if this Bill were based upon a purely electoral principle, it would command universal assent in Scotland, whereas, if it remains based partly upon the electoral and partly on the property qualification it will command no assent and no enthusiasm on the part of the general public in Scotland. The Government have somehow or other got hold of the new notion that taxation and representation must go together. They have got this notion of taxation and representation going together on the brain, and it is clouding their judgment. The old maxim was differently stated. It was that there should be no taxation without representation. The principle of taxation and representation going together is not in operation in this country at all. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) said in his speech that the electors ought to feel the rise and fall of the rates. It seems to me that you could not base your qualification upon a worse foundation than that of pecuniary and personal considerations. I notice that the Government object to sanitary matters being left to the care of the Parochial Boards in Scotland. Why are not sanitary matters adequately dealt with in Scotland? I can speak from experience, having been Chairman of a Parochial Board. It is because on the Parochial Boards you have a preponderance of owners of property, and when complaints are made about the unsanitary condition of any property, the property owners at once oppose the taking of active steps to remedy the condition of things simply because they have a personal interest in the matter. The proper course is to create a purely elected body which will act for the good of the general public, without being biassed by the amount of money which they may possibly be out of pocket by the adoption of proper measures. In this Bill the Government do not carry out the principle of taxation and representation going together. At present the Commissioners of Supply pay the whole of the taxes with one exception. The Bill proposes to take the management of affairs out of their hands and to hand them over to an elected body. The result will be that the ratepayers will have a preponderating voice in the management of matters, although they may not pay a single copper towards the expenditure. Under the Parliamentary franchise a man who does not pay any of the Imperial taxes may vote for a Member of Parliament. The household franchise is not given to a man occupying a dwelling because he occupies that dwelling, but merely for purposes of registration. If, instead of a census every 10 years we had one every year, we might put on the roll every man of 21 years of age who was on the register at the time when the previous census was taken The model Liberal doctrine on which the Constitution of this country is at present based is that of the government of the people by the people and for the people. All law in this country is the expression of the will of the people, and the cumulative wisdom of the people is the basis of our system. The men who are selected to represent the people are not selected on account of any personal or pecuniary interest they may have in the matters with which they have to deal, and it would be the greatest possible mistake for Parliament to introduce the element of self-interest and the element of property into the management of our local affairs. Well, then it is said that we should extend the jurisdiction of the County Councils to such subjects as that of education. If you are going to adopt a course of that kind you ought certainly to establish the County Councils on a wide basis. I think it is a great misfortune that at the present time we have so many registers. We could in a very simple way use the

Parliamentary register as the basis of the local registers. In the case of burghs, all we should have to do would be to add those who desire to be added in respect of being women or Peers. By adopting a proposal of this kind we should obtain a uniform register, which would be made up every year and which would apply to burgh and county alike. The School Board, Parochial Board, and County Council elections might take place alternately. With regard to the police, there is a great unwillingness on the part of the Government to hand over the control of the police to the County Councils in accordance with the system adopted in the burghs. It must be admitted that no fault has hitherto been found with the management of the police by the burghs. It is said that in the Highlands it might not be advisable to give the management of the police to some of the County Councils. But I would ask whether it is wise to base this new system of Local Government upon an exceptional case which might never arise? You always have the power to pass an Act of Parliament to meet exceptional cases, and you can, if you wish, insert some special power in this Bill, such as that of authorizing the Sheriff to interfere in exceptional circumstances. It would be, however, in my opinion, a great mistake to withhold from the people the control of the police. The police force is, practically, the representative of the people in maintaining law and order. You are by degrees converting it into a military force. You are giving it a military training and taking away from it that civil character which has hitherto appertained to it. We say that it ought to retain the characteristics of a civil force, and that its control ought to be entrusted to the people. I venture to say that if the Bill be passed upon its present lines, it will awaken no enthusiasm whatever in Scotland. It introduces the possibility of the ratepayers being saddled with increased expenditure, and the result is that, as far as the ratepayers are concerned, you might as well not have passed it at all. With regard to the financial arrangements of the measure, I think the Government have altogether overlooked the local purposes for which grants in aid have been given. I am not one of those who object to the application to education of the sum available for distribution, but I would point out that the Government are taking up a very inconsistent attitude in this matter. The Chancellor of the Exchequer some time ago pointed out that taxation bore unjustly on property, and he handed over a certain amount of Imperial taxation to the Local Authorities. One and a half per cent of the Probate Duty was handed over by him to local taxation as a contribution from realty. When they have appropriated the money in this way, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government turn round and say, "Here is £171,000 for the purpose which the majority of the people of Scotland wish—namely, free education." What I wish to point out is this, that the whole of that £171,000 was appropriated in Scotland as it was appropriated in England and in Ireland, and it was a just contribution from the Imperial Exchequer for the relief of the local ratepayer, and for that purpose alone. Now you are intercepting this £171,000. I do not say much about that, only I do object to your saying that this, which is the property of the local taxpayer, is money handed over to him, as if you were devoting £171,000 for the purposes of free education. You might just as well get this money out of the local rates as intercept this money, for it is the local taxpayers' money that you are dealing with here. What is the use of trying to cut and carve about £171,000? Let the whole of the local grants go to the local ratepayer, and then have the boldness to say to him, "Now you have got those contributions, we mean to abolish school fees, and we will pay whatever is necessary for the purpose of bringing education up to the proper standard." That would be statesmanlike; but, instead, the Government are adopting a policy which will land them in inextricable confusion. I support the application of this money to free education. As to the £30,000 given to the Highlands, I concur in the criticisms offered on this side of the House. One half of that sum has gone to the landed proprietors and the other half to a portion of the tenants. To the poor people of the Highlands not one halfpenny of this £30,000 will go. They are too poor to pay rates, and therefore not one single copper of this money will go to their relief. More than that, you are not

removing the sources of poverty. If you would just lay out the capital value of the £30,000 in promoting public works, in opening communications with the Highlands, then you would enable the people to earn a living for themselves by honest industry, and you would relieve the burden on the rates. It is not by subsidising the rates that you will do away with poverty, but by removing the sources. We are an Imperial country, an United Kingdom. Scotland is not a separate part of this kingdom; and if distress exists in Scotland, it is the duty of the United Kingdom to relieve that distress. The Government by their action are going to establish a separatist doctrine; you are going to treat Scotland separately. If you are going to allocate the money to Scotland, our answer is, "Give us a Parliament in Scotland and we will allocate the money, for we have to support our own poor. We do not require your assistance." We find that Conservative Members on the other side will concur in the view that the money should be paid out of the Imperial Exchequer. You cannot treat distress in one part of the kingdom differently from distress in another part. We do not object to your works for distress in Ireland; we only regret that Ireland is in a position to require assistance. We are proud that we do not require assistance. If, however, any part of our country does require assistance, then we hold it has a just claim upon the United Kingdom. Then with regard to the £35,000 for roads. Here, again, is the most unfair treatment of the burgh ratepayer compared with the county ratepayer. I would like the Lord Advocate to explain why, two years ago, the grant for roads was doubled. There was a Supplementary Estimate brought in, and £35,000 was added. Nobody asked for any explanation. For myself, I thought the amount had been omitted in the original estimate, so I allowed it to pass. We can now see the reason of the addition. It laid the foundation for saying that last year we granted £70,000 to roads. It was done in view of the Local Government Bill coming on, and that is how you managed it. Now, how do you divide the money granted for roads? The grants are made according to the cost of maintenance of roads. Now, the cost of maintenance of roads in counties is exactly double the cost in burghs, yet you give £60,000 to the counties and £10,000 to the burghs. Why do you not distribute the money according to the cost of maintenance in the usual way? You give the counties six times, instead of twice, what the burghs obtain. The President of the Local Government Board says the townspeople use the country roads. But if the country people bring produce into the towns it is for their profit, and if burgh tradesmen take goods to them it is for their convenience; or if excursionists from the town use the country roads, they spend their money among the inhabitants of the country. Look at it in whatever way you will, you find that the country roads are used for the purposes of the people of the country, and they really get the benefit of their own roads. With regard to free education, the Government have acknowledged the principle. It is impossible for them to withdraw from the position they have taken up; and if the principle is not fully carried out, it is not because the principle is wrong, but because there is not sufficient money for the particular purpose. It will be very difficult indeed in future to collect the school fees after the Government have acknowledged the principle of free education. There is no use in trying to stop short on this question. We must go the whole way. Stopping short would be a cause of greater grievances than if we had never touched the matter at all. It is said you are going to relieve the lower standards, but I maintain that the more important are the higher standards, in the interests of the development of education and skilled labour, which is the most valuable possession a country can have. Then, again, look at the decision in regard to Scotland. Standard V. is to be made compulsory, whereas Standard IV. is compulsory in England; so that you make the child a burden upon the Scotch parent a year longer than upon the English parent. I heard some remarkable statements from the hon. Baronet the Member for Wigtonshire. He was educated before the School Boards came into existence, and that may explain in some way his arithmetical calculations. I think the Scotch Education Department must have inspired his figures.

The hon. Member for North Aberdeen said that the parents of three children at school would pay £3 18s. a year for six years, and he showed the difference in the cost of paying school fees and paying for the relief of school fees from the rates. According to the hon. Baronet the Member for Wigtonshire a parent in Aberdeen, if he occupied a £12 house, would pay 2s. 3d. a year, and the amount spread over 30 years would be £3 7s. 6d., and if a parent had three children at school the saving would only be 7s. 6d. The average school fees in Scotland are 13s. for one child, and when it has passed the Fifth Standard, for which the average education is six years, the average payment for the child would be £3 18s., and if there were two children it would be £7 16s. The hon. Baronet went further, and said the third child goes free; but it is only free for three years, and if he will make the calculation for himself he will find the amount to be between £10 and £11 which the parent will have to pay in regard to school fees. Just look at the difference. The parent has to pay £10 or £11 within ten years at a time when it is most difficult for him to bring up his children; but in the case of paying the rate that is spread over 30 years. But I will take the hon. Baronet a little farther. If he will calculate the interest the school fees cost the man, and balance his position at the end of 30 years, he will find that the parent will have paid £20 more in principal and interest that way than in the other, and yet the hon. Baronet tried to make out that the saving was 7s. 6d. On another point the hon. Baronet said that, by giving free education in the first three standards, the Government had assured the greatest good to the greatest number, and that is so in a pecuniary sense. But when we are speaking of education we do not speak of it in that sense; and I ask, are you doing the greatest good to the children?

SIR H. MAXWELL (Wigton): We cheapen the fees.

MR. CALDWELL: I admit that you give the parent the advantage of cheaper fees, but that is all. We say the best thing to do is not to give free education in the lower standards, but rather, by getting the parent to pay for education in those standards, to give him an inducement to continue the education in the higher standards. In this way you will be doing the greatest good to the children and to the nation. We do not look at this as a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence; we want to place it on a broader and wider basis in the interests of education generally. The hon. Baronet also said they had adopted the principle of the School Board, fixing lower fees for the lower standards. But why are the fees low in the lower standards? It is because the cost of education is much less in the lower than in the higher standards. In the lower standards you employ pupil teachers, and consequently pay them less than is paid to the teachers employed in the higher standards. But does it not occur to the hon. Baronet that in giving the Government grant this process was reversed, because in that case the higher grant is given for the higher education; and that being so, why, in the case of this Bill, should the Government give the larger sum to the lower standards?

SIR H. MAXWELL: What I said was that the proposal of the Government followed the example set by the School Boards in recognizing the necessity of free, or comparatively free, education in the lower standards.

MR. CALDWELL: The hon. Baronet said that the parents, having saved the cost of the fees in the earlier period, will be able to pay them in the later period. Does he, as a practical man, mean to say that Scotch parents will lay aside so much every year so that it will be available when the time comes for the purpose of paying the higher fees of the School Board? It is not at all probable that this will be the case; on the contrary, if they have not been called on to pay at the earlier stages, they will be the less inclined to do so at the later ones; besides which, the children being older cost more for food and clothing, and there is also a greater temptation to withdraw the children, if they can find sufficient excuse, in order to put them to work. I would say that if we give any relief at all, we ought to relieve the higher education and not the lower. I will not detain the House longer, only to point out to the Government that if they do not proceed on a wide basis, but insist on holding to the lines of this Bill, they may as well not pass it at all, If it were not for the education clauses.

I would much rather see the Bill shelved. The Government need not think they can stop short of going the whole length of Standard V; and they will find that not only will they have to go this length, in Scotland, but they will have to do the same thing in England because the Liberal Party will make it a test question that the parent should have no school fees to pay, as in Scotland. I am not at the present moment concerned about the local ratepayer. In England, however, where you have given so much in relief of the ratepayers, you will not be able to take the money out of their pockets again for the purposes of free education. The English ratepayer will have a strong objection to the local rates being used for denominational schools. That is an objection you cannot well get over; so that the result will be that from bye-election to bye-election you will be gradually forced to adopt the principle of free education, and being unable to saddle it on the ratepayers, you will eventually have to take the money from the Imperial Exchequer.

*Sir G. TREVELYAN (Bridgeton, Glasgow): I shall reserve my congratulations upon these Bills until they leave the House, but I trust they will be read a second and third time together, and that they will be considered by the same Committee, whatever that Committee may be, as the alterations to be made by that Committee will be extremely important. The English Members have long been in the habit of saying that the Scotch Members are a Parliament within a Parliament, and they say this in praise of us. We have now arrived at a time when that statement can be tested; we have come to a period when we shall be able to see whether matters concerning Scotland solely are to be managed in accordance with Scotch opinion. I should be very glad if we could have that Parliament within a Parliament which is proposed by my Friend the hon. Member for Leith Burghs (Mr. Munro Ferguson), but if that is not to be the case, and these Bills are to be discussed in Committee of the whole House, I earnestly trust that the majority of the Scotch Members will not be overborne by the majority of the English Members, especially English Members, who do not care to inform themselves as to what Scotch opinion is by listening to Scotch debates. Now, Sir, these Bills are drawn in such a manner that it will be very easy after Whitsuntide for the Scotch Members to make up and declare their minds on every separate point; and in this debate on the Second Reading—a debate in which so many Members wish to speak—I shall try to be as brief as possible in setting forward as clearly as I can those matters which I think ought to be altered in these Bills. First of all, I come to the constituency that is to elect the County Council. I quite agree with my hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Elgin Burghs, that it is a great pity that the opportunity has not been taken for consolidating the electoral arrangements of Parochial Boards, County Councils, and Parliament. We have got a separate constituency for Parliament, and I earnestly trust we shall have a separate constituency for the County Councils and Parochial Boards if it be necessary seriously to discuss the Parochial Boards Bill, which, however, I hope we shall not see again this Session. The service franchise-holder, whose house is not separately rated, and who does not pay the rates himself, does not have a vote. Now the compound householder pays the rates in the shape of a higher rent, and exactly in the same way the service franchise man paid the rates in the shape of receiving diminished wages, and it is absolutely impossible to turn the flank of that position. There are one or two points on which we may gain experience from the English Act. I know that in Northumberland, which so much resembles the southern counties of Scotland, excessive disappointment was felt by the service franchise voters when they found they had not the vote. Not only were they excluded from the list, but from the polling booth. I am proud to say that these men were very much disappointed and regarded it as a personal misfortune that had befallen them. The President of the Local Government Board found, in the fact that the service voters were so numerous, an argument why they should not be placed on the register. I must say, however, that when Parliament is considering what is to be the constituency of a self-governing nation, the idea of excluding a particular class

because of their number is most extraordinary.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): May I point out that that was not the reason I gave. I was dealing with and assuming a ratepaying franchise, and my argument was that inasmuch as the service voters did not pay rates and were a large majority in the constituencies, it was certainly contrary to sound principle that the majority who did not pay rates should practically have the control with reference to a rate-paying franchise.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN: I am quite willing to leave the argument as the right hon. Gentleman has stated it, and I assert that the argument depends on the great numbers of these men. Now it appears to me that the argument should go the other way. The Secretary for Ireland went still further. He said the extension of the present system would embrace new functions and attributes, and that the County Councils, before many years had elapsed, will be entrusted with other and more important functions than are yet given to them. He added that he was not prepared to hand over the whole of these powers to people who do not now and never will contribute to the rates. Therefore the Secretary for Ireland thinks that because new functions are to be given to the Council, and because the social, moral and intellectual interests of the people are to be gradually handed over to those Councils he has found in that fact an additional reason for excluding them from its deliberations. I hope that the English Members will not be deceived by the name of "service franchise." These men are not the personal servants of gentlemen, they are not grooms and gardeners; they are the very pick of the population. They are men who, from their character and habits of life, are peculiarly independent men, taking great interest in all the social and intellectual affairs of the neighbourhood—a very superior class of agricultural labourers equal to any that is to be found in any part of the world. To say that they are not a class of men who can be trusted with public money because they are likely to expend it too freely is really too strong an order. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Then what was the meaning of insisting on the direct payment of rates? They are men who, by their nature, are economical, who hate jobbery, and who like to have their full pennyworth for their penny. In 1861 there was a Report of a Commission on Education, which showed that, at a time when English rural districts were often dark and ignorant, these service voters in the South of Scotland could all read with ease and almost all write with accuracy and precision. I remember distinctly in the controversy upon household suffrage in the counties that it was for the sake of these men largely that the county franchise was obtained. Then having for their sake given their countrymen the Parliamentary franchise, are we going to deny them a share in managing their local affairs? They contribute likewise to the fund which is allotted in aid of rates. What do you say to the Probate Duty? I knew a man of this class whose widow has been able to spend £200 in purchasing an annuity and another whose furniture was sold for £55; which would bring them both within the range of those who contribute to the Probate Duty. I cannot put the matter better than it was put by my right hon. Friend the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) 20 years ago. When my right hon. Friend brought forward his Resolution for establishing County Councils he asked the House to trust the government as well as the financial part of the administration of the counties to those whom they were not afraid to trust in regard to Imperial matters, and with the control of the national expenditure. That is what we are going to urge upon the Committee now. My right hon. Friend thought so 20 years ago, and we on this side of the House think the same thing now and intend to emphasize it. The suggestion which has been advanced by the Government to mitigate the grievance that the service occupier might voluntarily pay the rates, and so become a voter, I must condemn as dangerous in its tendency, because the moment such a system is introduced it offers a premium to wirepullers to interfere with the voters. It is an idea which was absolutely blown out of the water in the debate of 1867 by the late Mr. Bright and the late Mr. Forster, which showed the absurdity of the proposition that in a few weeks the Government had to

abandon it. Yet the proposal of Mr. Disraeli was a trifle compared with that of the Government now. It is a dangerous principle because it introduces the system of a man doing some voluntary act in order that he may get the vote. I regard this principle, if extended elsewhere, with absolute dismay, and I regarded the application of it in the present Bill as a strange and petty and almost trifling device. The next point is the question of keeping alive the Commissioners of Supply to make a committee to deal with the standing expenditure and the police. It is said in defence of that part of the scheme that the whole cost of the police of the counties falls on the owners. Who, then, pays the License Duties? Everybody knows that these Duties do not fall on the owners of the soil. The Lord Advocate has not yet been able to lay on the Table a Paper giving the distribution of the License Duties in Scotland, but that in the English counties fully one-half consists of public house licenses, liquor licenses, and tobacco licenses, which certainly do not fall upon the landlords. But I do not care who pays for the police. The question is, whom does law, order, and the morality of the locality concern? Wherever there is local Government there law and order are the first care. I used to represent the burgh of Hawick—a very high-spirited burgh indeed. Law and order were ticklish things on one or two occasions there. I have seen the town of Hawick in a state of the most terrible excitement, and if the charge of the police had been in the hands of the Sheriff that day the peace would not have been preserved; but it was in the hands of the provost, whose politics differ from my own, but who was a man whom everybody in the town knew and trusted, and who knew the localities, town, and the temper of the people, and the whole thing went off as peaceably as possible. In my opinion it will be the same wherever there is a prospect of disorder if the people feel that the police are their police and are in their hands. I asked a friend of mine, a chairman of a County Council, a man also of different politics from my own, whether there was anything he wished to change with respect to the County Council, and he said there was one thing, and only one, and that was the Joint Committees of Magistrates and Delegates from the County Council, and the reason he gave was that the jealousy and ill-feeling of class against class he had seen in that body was the feeling against elected Magistrates as members of the Committee. The consequence was that no Gentleman filling an *ex officio* position, however much respected he might be, was chosen on the Committee. It will be just the same in Scotland. None of these *ad valorem* Commissioners of Supply will be chosen on the Committee. I think the Government have shown no reason whatever for putting a slight upon the inhabitants of Haddingtonshire and Mid Lothian by saying that they are not as fit to manage their own police as the inhabitants of Glasgow and Dundee. With regard to another point, I utterly deny that because the landlord is to pay the capital expenditure upon the roads the ratepayer should not have an equal vote in the management. It is not only a question of who is to pay for the roads. The land of the country for certain purposes belongs as much to the people of the country as to the landlords, and we think that they ought to have certain rights which they do not possess now. We think they ought to have a right to sites for places of worship and to a certain amount of ground for allotments. But their first right, and their undisputed right, is the right of way. The question of roads or how a road is to go is not one for the man across whose land the road is to pass. It would be as monstrous a thing to allow landlords to say how a road should go as it would be to have a Committee of Landlords Upstairs appointed to say how a railroad is to go. The roads are just as much the rights of the public as the land off the roads is the right of the landlords. Then again, I take it that there would be a very strong opposition to allowing the County Council to choose a Chairman from outside. Another point on which the county should be put on a level with the town is in having elected Magistrates. No argument has been brought forward to show that what is good and safe for the town would not be good and safe for the county, and these Magistrates, when elected, ought to have the same duties and responsibilities, including licensing, as are in the hands of the Magistrates of the towns. I now

come, in conclusion, to the finance scheme, which has already been ably argued by my hon. Friend the Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter). I express my entire adherence to his view that in regard to the abolition of the education fee, it is a fatal defect to begin with the lower standards. The effect will be to discourage parents from allowing their children to proceed to the upper standards at a time when possibly the wages which the children might earn have become a consideration. The Education Institute of Scotland has sent round to Members a paper in which they condemn the proposal as objectionable, and recommended that the whole sum from the Probate Duty should be applied to the remission of school fees. It is plain to any one who listened to the hon. Member for North Aberdeen that the question could be settled. There is, to begin with, the £30,000 for the Highlands, which it is quite clear the Highlands do not want. I am not sorry to give money to the Highlands provided it comes out of the right pocket and goes into the right pocket. I object to its being given to landlords in the way in which it is proposed to be given. But if it were given to the schools it would benefit both landlords and people; the former because the school rates bear unfairly upon them, and the latter in the form of relief from school fees. I have no wish to be unjust to the landlords. I think they have suffered and suffered extensively, but the grant given in this way will relieve them exactly where they have suffered. There is at present an enormous difference in the school rates of different places with the same rateable value. For instance, the schools in Berwickshire cost £5,000, whereas in Invernessshire they cost £12,600. One great cause of this is the irregularity, and even more than irregularity, of the payment of school fees. In the Highlands the attendance of the children is exceptionally irregular—in the Lewis, for example, the average attendance is only 1,900, with 4,000 school places. In one group of parishes where £195 ought to have been collected only £5 was collected. The result has been to commit a great injustice to the ratepayers, and I think that every penny that can be given to the Highlands out of the Probate Duty ought to be given in order to get rid of the payment of fees for education. The Highlands specially want help in the matter of education. I hope the Government will not object to go further in this Bill than they went in the English Bill. The Scotch Education Act has been a vast improvement on the English, and the same course should be followed with the Scotch Local Government Act. I hope the Government will consult Scotch opinion so as to make, as the hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) said, the County Government of Scotland as admirable as the existing system of Local Government in Burghs. Less than the Scotch Burghs have the Scotch Counties will not care to condescend to take.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): In replying to the various arguments and inquiries which have been addressed to me in the course of the Debate, I wish, in the first place, without speaking in any controversial sense, to say that I think it will hardly be disputed that the Debate of late has shown certain signs of repetition, and a large number of points have been raised which are really more suitable for the Committee stage of the Bill. Various important questions have been brought under the attention of the House by hon. Gentlemen on both sides, and all of them will form proper subjects for inquiry and consideration. I have been asked by my hon. Friend the Member for the Partick division of Lanarkshire (Mr. Craig Sellar), what is to be the number of councillors assigned to each county. The duty of fixing the number is assigned to the Secretary for Scotland. But, following the precedent of the Bill of last year, I will undertake that an indication shall be given of the scheme which the Government propose to adopt. I have no reason to complain of the strictures which have been passed on the Bill by the Front Bench opposite. My right hon. Friend the Member for Clackmannan (Mr. J. B. Balfour) made a most urbane and copious attempt to belittle the scope of the Bill; but he did it in so agreeable a manner that he did not leave any ill-feeling behind. But, although copious in his objections, he failed to make good those which he pointed out. He said that this Bill is conspicuous by the number of subjects with which it does not deal, and among

these he specified education and the poor. Now, does my right hon. and learned Friend mean that education and the poor are to be transferred from parochial into county questions? Is the unit of administration for education to be the county instead of the parish? If my right hon. Friend does not mean this, his speech was a piece of rhetoric rather than argument. If he meant that the County Council was to exercise a revising power, and to be a sort of Court of review, serious and complicated questions would arise. Then the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division (Sir G. Trevelyan) has referred to the administration of justice. But has the right hon. Gentleman any idea of the kind of business with which the County Magistrate has to deal? The right hon. Gentleman ought to have known that the tendency has been in all matters of importance for the jurisdiction of the Magistrates to be exercised by the paid and legally trained Sheriff. Then it is said that the Government have failed to present a sufficiently popular basis of election. But has the right hon. Gentleman consulted with Scotch Members on the Front Opposition Bench? Let me refer to the speech of the hon. Member for Banff (Mr. Duff), made in February, 1889, in which the hon. Member said there were two alternatives, either to alter the incidence of the rates, or to allow the owners to continue to have the management of the rates.

MR. DUFF (Banffshire): I was referring exclusively to the rates falling on the proprietor and not to the general principle of rating.

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: That is my point. We are leaving the rates the hon. Gentleman referred to upon the owners, and yet we are proposing to give a popular suffrage. The hon. Gentleman thinks that is not a logical method of carrying out the system of rating because, he says, you ought to have owners and owners only. I hope, before the right hon Gentleman falls foul of the service franchise, he will procure some appearance of unanimity on the Front Bench opposite. I think the right hon. Gentleman has discussed the service franchise in a more acrimonious spirit than was necessary. I would deprecate the heated discussion of a subject which is one to be calmly considered. The right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division says that registration has been combined with voting as a convenient way of making up a list of names. Is it for that reason that a man who is assessed and does not pay his rates does not get the vote? The proposals of the Bill have been criticized in some cases fairly, and in others with much unfairness. It has been represented that we have tried to exclude the service franchise. We have done nothing of the kind. As to the objection of the right hon. Member for Clackmannan that the service voter must claim, there is something in it, but the lodger has to claim every year. On this question, whether better provision might be formed for dealing with the service franchise holders, the Government are quite prepared to consider the matter. The House, I am sure, will believe that we are guided by this consideration—that it might be rash to introduce into the control of the County Council a class who are not consciously affected by the increase in the rates. The point is that we should obtain some guarantee for a due sense of responsibility on the part of the voter; a sense of responsibility which the call of the rate collector is best calculated to enforce. I pass from that to the question of stereotyping, as to which there is an interesting diversity of opinion. Attacks have been made from various quarters upon our proposals. The problem is how are you fairly and equitably to give popular representations, and at the same time not to increase the rates. What we propose is simply this. We desire that the landlords should not benefit by the change, although it may involve a certain diminution of their political influence. We desire that the present burdens on the land should remain, but we think it only fair that the landlords should be protected against administration which is no longer in their hands, and which may throw fresh burdens upon them. We say that the existing rates shall continue, and if there is any increment that it shall fall half on the owner and half on the occupier. It is said that a large part of the present burden has arisen from expenditure upon permanent works packed into a few years which might have been spread over a longer term of years. It is well worthy of consideration whether a

burden of this kind should not be treated as the normal burden taking one year with another which falls upon the land. It is said that in certain counties there has been an enormous and extraordinary expenditure. We propose to take the average expenditure for five years, but if it is thought that it would be more equitable and more likely to arrive at the true state of the facts to take a longer number of years, that is certainly a question which ought to be considered. Our desire is to ascertain what is the proportion of the rates which represents the existing burdens on the landlord, and having ascertained that, then to apportion anything additional between the owner and the occupier. The right hon. Member for Clackmannan says that what we propose is to fix for all time the burden that shall fall upon the owners without taking into account any fluctuations in the value of property. Now the point is this. The criticisms which have been offered might be just if they fixed the gross amount of the rates, but they do not do that. They fix the rates. Let me take 2d. in the pound. Suppose we had £1,000. If that increased to £2,000, then there would be 2,000 twopences instead of 1,000. The former of the proposals rests on its intrinsic merits. When the right hon. Gentleman proposed to throw upon the tenants one-half of the rates which fall upon the owners, he proposed to put upon the tenants what may be not incorrectly described as a new burden of £100,000 a year. That is the only proposal competing with the proposal of the Government. If the Government had proposed that before the abstraction from the power of the country gentlemen they should have made those gentlemen a present of £100,000 a year, what speeches the right hon. Member for Bridgeton would have made in the House and the country. I, therefore, hope the country will note that our proposal is to leave the burden on the landlords, while right hon. Gentlemen opposite have no alternative proposal to make except to take £100,000 off the landlords and plant it on the tenants. I do not think these proposals will find very much acceptance, or that they will be very forcibly pressed, and I therefore turn to another topic of great importance. The question of the police is one which every man who holds, or has held, or may hold office, is bound to speak on with great circumspection. It is a subject from which should be proscribed all the demagogic arts, although I am not sure that that has been so to-night. It was so when my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Clackmannan (Mr. J. P. B. Balfour) declined to commit himself against the Government proposals. For my part I should regard it as an act of criminal folly for any Government to try and get popularity out of this question. It is easy to praise the people and say they have confidence in them, but what the Government have thought proper to do is to place the control of the police where popularity should not be attainable. I do not say the County Councillors would act otherwise than from a sense of duty, but the subject of the management of the police may be put into the crucible of electioneering vanity or popularity hunting, and lead to excitement and discussion on matters as to which excitement and discussion are not the proper methods of obtaining the objects in view. The Government are not starting a new system, but merely logically carrying out existing Acts. It is a mistake to assume that the Commissioners of Supply have uncontrolled management of the police. According to the Act of 1857, passed under a Liberal Government, the Police Committee consisted of the Lord Lieutenant, the Sheriff, and a number of elected Commissioners of Supply, from three to 15; there might, therefore, be a Committee of which three were elected and two official. Therefore, when the Government are taunted with distrust of the County Councils, I retort that they are merely doing what the Legislature has implied with regard to the Commissioners of Supply. So much for the counties; but the right hon. and learned Member for Clackmannan and others have spoken of the burghs. Under the general police statute in Scotland, on the vital question of the dismissal or appointment of an inspector of police and the question of his salary, nothing can be done without the concurrence of the provost of the burgh and the sheriff of the county, and, in case of difference, a reference to the

Lord Advocate. In the case of large towns like Glasgow and Edinburgh, where there have been more recent opportunities of legislating upon that subject, there are similar provisions to those of the General Police Act. It is, therefore, erroneous to say the Government are departing from the existing police system of the counties or the practice of the burghs. On that subject I trust the House will support the Government in standing firmly by their proposals. Now, my right hon. and learned Friend has said the Government should rest satisfied with the check they have in the power of the Secretary for Scotland to refuse the half contribution for the clothing and pay of the police. Suppose that were to occur, the result would be, in the first place, that a very heavy burden would be thrown, not upon the people properly to blame, but upon the landlords and ratepayers, and what would the effect of the refusal of the grant be except to paralyze the police? It would be particularly inefficacious in the case put by the right hon. and learned gentleman—that is, in a crisis. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that this idea on the part of the Government was due to the disturbed state of some parts of the Highlands. The Government necessarily had in view both the Highlands and the Lowlands of Scotland in drawing up their scheme. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that the Government ought to deal with Scotland piecemeal, but is there agreement on that point? Does the right hon. Gentleman carry with him the representatives of the crofter districts? Although the considerations affecting the north-west Highlands did influence the Government, apart from them altogether the Government deemed it wise to establish the whole police arrangements on such a steady and impregnable basis as should guard against any possible dangers in future. Let us take this test. Suppose we had been discussing the Local Government Bill in 1881 before the disturbances in the Highlands broke out, and the Government had put forward the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, would not they have been blamed for want of prescience in not realizing that there were times of storm as well as times of calm to be considered? Turning to another point of salient importance—namely, the educational proposals of the Government, I am not surprised at the large proportion of the debate which has been occupied with that interesting subject; at the same time I think it should hardly have been discussed as though this were a general debate on free education. The Government have endeavoured to secure two objects. They have left as they stand the grants to the rates. The right hon. Member for Bridgeton (Sir G. Trevelyan) does not seem to like that proposal, because the rates which will be relieved are paid by the landlord.

*Sir G. TREVELYAN: I do not like a special grant to the Highlands.

Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: He would have liked it if it had gone to the poor people. I thought we were discussing the question of the application of this money to the rates. I do not understand why we are entitled to offer alms to people who are not paying rates, although I quite understand that is characteristic of the right hon. Gentleman's politics.

*Sir G. TREVELYAN: I do not like to interrupt so courteous and instructive a speech, but the fact of the matter is, I object to any special application out of the Scotch Probate Duty to the Highlands at all, and I likewise object, if you do give money to the Highlands, to giving it specially to the ratepaying landlords.

Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: If there is a grant it must be a grant in favour of the deserving and needy! That is leaving the region of rates for the region of general beneficence. I trace here, again, what I think is the influence which has disfigured the right hon. Gentleman's speech. The right hon. Gentleman never can resist the tendency to make a demagogic point. He always fastens on a point where there is any opportunity of praising the poor at the expense of the rich, and he has to-night gone the length of saying he does not like a grant from the Probate Duty to the rates where the relief happens to fall on the landlords only. He said he thought it would be most desirable to give it to the poor in the form of school fees, and he proceeded to point out that in the very part of the country to which he was referring no school fees are paid. Therefore his method is one which I find exceedingly

difficult—I do not say to follow but to understand. I have always understood that the statement of the President of the Local Government Board has been accepted as at all events showing very good reason for the continuation of the £30,000, but I am not going to let the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton off on the subject of the landlord. And let me remind the House that in the giving of this money you must give it in the relief of the rates, that is to say the ratepayers, and it is the fact that in no part of the country have the landlords a better right to get it than in the Highland districts, and for the reason that they have not only to pay their own rates but the tenants' rates. Now I was going to say one or two words as to our educational proposals. Our plan is to meet in the first place the grants in aid of the rates, and in the second place to wipe off school fees where we think they press most heavily. I deprecate hon. Gentlemen running the risk of making the payment of school fees unpopular by the excessive lengths to which they go. The proposal that we should take over some of the rates in order to clear off all school fees seems to me one which will inevitably lead to that result. The ratepayers are a larger class than the friends of school children. It is only at one part of a man's life that he has children at school. And, therefore, I strongly deprecate the suggestion that there is anything which savours of privilege in making payment out of the rates, or anything popular in being unjust to the ratepayers and generous to the parents of school children. We have done our best to harmonize the relief given to owners and occupiers, to parents and ratepayers. The right hon. Gentleman has started the question between remitting fees in the higher and lower standards. By freeing the lower standards we clear the largest number of children—two-thirds of the children are in the lower standards—and we are able to wipe off the fees of that large number of children to an absolute extent. When we turn to the higher standards, we there clear away the fees from all children who would have to go to the Parochial Board to obtain them. Is it not the case that there has been constant hostility to the schemes of the Educational Commissioners dealing with endowments when they ventured to propose the application of endowments to the higher standards? But, on the other hand, I hope hon. Gentlemen will not leave out of account that the amount of provision for free education, if that word is to be used, in the upper standards is not to be measured merely by what we directly provide from this Probate money, because there are some endowments which are devoted to the payment of fees in the lower standards. Our plan propels them from the lower to the higher standards, because we propose that, inasmuch as all fees will be paid in the lower standards, any endowments which are dedicated to the lower standards shall hereafter go to the higher standards. That is a very important consideration in dealing with this matter.

MR. W. P. SINCLAIR (Falkirk): Can the right hon. and learned Gentleman estimate the amount of that contribution?

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: It is several thousands of pounds. I have not the figures at hand, but it is a very substantial amount. Now, there might be much said on this subject, but this is not the stage of the Bill at which it should be said. I do not know that I have occupied too much of the time of the House, considering the number of topics to be dealt with, and I hope I have not shown any disposition to treat this subject in an acrimonious spirit. Necessarily, upon a subject of this kind, the Government depend to a large extent on the co-operation of all sections of the House, and I venture to think it will be found that, while there are subjects upon which we are more or less inclined to disagree, but which, after all, must be disposed of, there are questions upon which the ideas furnished by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite will be valuable in the attempt to improve the measure. There are various matters upon which two heads are better than one, and upon which the application of the candid speeches of the various sections of the House will no doubt improve the Bill. I think I gathered from the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirling and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Clackmannan, that we are to be favoured with their auspicious co-opera-

tion, and I rejoice that they are likely so largely to influence the action of their friends on the subject. If we have the co-operation which, I think, the people of Scotland feel we are entitled to, we shall most heartily reciprocate the good feeling it will exhibit.

*Mr. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland): I am not going to express disappointment at this measure. I am not one who expects Liberal measures from a Conservative Government, and therefore I am not disappointed. This measure has been announced with a great flourish of trumpets from every platform in Scotland and in the Scotch press, but now we find that so far from there being any trust of the people that principle is entirely absent from the Bill. I cannot find any other principle in the Bill than distrust of the people. What the Government should have done was to extend to the county the system of municipal government now existing in the burghs of Scotland, but instead of that they have devised a Conservative measure. I would not have intervened in the present debate but for the assumption of the Lord Advocate that the restriction with regard to the control of the police has been imposed upon Scotland because of certain disturbances which occurred in the Highlands.

Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: What I said was that I thought the state of the Highlands formed a strong reason in itself, but the considerations of general policy regarding the police were applicable to the whole country.

*Mr. A. SUTHERLAND: The disturbances in the Highlands were not due to the action of the people but to that of the landlords, and I shall always object to the blame being thrown on the people. It is not for me to object to the grant of £30,000 to the Highlands. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division has said, it is not the origin of the grant that we object to so much as its destination. It is vain for the Lord Advocate to say that this relief to taxation in the Highlands will benefit the poor people. For every penny that will go into the pockets of the people of the Highland people hundreds of pounds will go into the pockets of the landlords. Who asked for this grant of £30,000 to be applied in the way suggested? It is not within my knowledge that any representative of a Highland county has ever asked for it. I know the representatives of Highland constituency have demanded money in relief of the Highland people. This £30,000 would solve the whole Highland question in five years. We cannot get money, and yet this grant is to be given to the landlords. The Lord Advocate has spoken of the chorus of approval with which this measure has been received in Scotland. I do not know what channels of information he has. I can congratulate the Lord Advocate in one respect, that his Bill is eminently amendable. With Clauses 12 and 18 struck out the Bill might be made to meet the wishes of the people of Scotland. I hope in Committee these clauses may be eliminated, and then the Bill will in some sense be made acceptable to the people of Scotland. Short of that nothing will meet the requirements of the case and the wishes of the Scottish people.

Mr. R. W. DUFF (Banffshire): I should have been prepared to wait in silence for the next stage of the Bill were it not for the allusion made by the Lord Advocate to some observations of mine in a special speech made to my constituents in Banffshire. I cannot but feel flattered that the right hon. Gentleman should take the trouble to read my Recess speeches, but in this instance he has placed upon my remarks an interpretation I did not intend them to convey. What I intended was this: that in regard to local taxation I desired to see a very broad and liberal system introduced, and all the rates managed by the County Councils. The difficulty is, a certain proportion of the rates is paid exclusively by the landlords; and with regard to this I said, and I still think, that the best way of dealing with the matter is, to get rid of the Commissioners of Supply altogether, and to divide the rates equally between the landlords and the tenants. That is one of the alternatives, but I admitted that if you did that you are bound to relieve tenants under existing leases, leaving them to come to new arrangements at the expiration of their term. The right hon. Gentleman is quite wrong when he says that my right hon. Friend the Member for Sterling (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), myself, and others want to put fresh taxes on the tenants, I contend that that is not the effect of our proposal. The effect

of our proposal would be that when the tenant under an existing lease came to make a new bargain with his landlord, he would get a proportionate reduction from the rent. This would simplify the whole system. I am quite willing to admit that in many parts of Scotland the Government proposal is the more popular of the two, but I know opinion is divided. The whole of the local taxation of Scotland excluding loans comes to about £4,000,000 a year, and the proportion paid by the landlords alone, taking it from the last Return of local taxation, is about £163,000 a year, a very small proportion to the whole taxation, and my contention is that it would be quite worth the tenants' while, in order to obtain a proper representative system, to put that sum equally on the landlords and tenants all over Scotland. It is not correct to say that I would relieve the landlord's burden and place that relief on the shoulders of the tenants, and we who know the Scottish farmer know that he is quite capable of taking care of himself in a bargain, and if he pays so much more for rates he must pay so much less for rent. The Lord Advocate told us in his introductory speech that by and by he would tell us the number of County Councillors we were to have. I do not remember at what stage the information was given in regard to the English Bill, but it is important we should know as soon as possible. I have heard various rumours, but I think an elastic principle should be applied, a greater number being allowed to the Highland parishes than to a densely populated county like Lanark. I take a county the right hon. Gentleman knows very well, Kincardine and the parish of Fetteresso, as fairly representative. Assuming that there will be a proportion of one Councillor to every 1,000 inhabitants, that would mean that the town of Stonehaven would have two and the rest of the parish would have four. But think what an amount of trouble, expense and machinery you will require to bring this about, and after all you only get rid of one Board, and the duties of the County Council will be insignificant. Those duties I think will have to be extended, and you will have to simplify matters by merging other Boards—I will not say for Educational matters—into the County Council. But before we proceed much further I hope we shall hear from the Government how many County Councillors we are to have, for that has an important bearing upon the whole of the Bill. There are other points connected with the Bill with which I am indisposed now to occupy time, but there is one omission upon which I may say a word. There is no reference in the Bill to powers which I think ought to be given to districts which include sea-coast towns to provide for harbour works. Former references to this subject, in connection with the fishing industry, have been met with the reply that it is a matter to be considered in relation to a Local Government scheme, and I think it is only right to call the attention of the Lord Advocate to the promises of his predecessor on this question of harbours. I do not want to go into it now, but in Committee I shall seek an opportunity of amending the Bill in this direction, and enlarging the powers of County Councils, especially in towns that have no Local Authority or means of giving collateral security. In burghs it is unnecessary, but the Solicitor General for Scotland is very familiar with Banffshire; we have met there in a political campaign, and he knows that in many small towns there is a want of good harbours but no means of giving security, and what is desired could be effected under this Bill. But I will not dwell upon this. I only rose for the purpose of repudiating the construction put upon my remarks by the Lord Advocate, while at the same time I say that none of those remarks, taken as a whole, do I wish to retract.

*MR. M'LAGAN (Linlithgow): I will not go into the wide range of subjects that has been opened in the course of this debate, and leaving untouched the questions of education and finance, I will deal with three points—the constituencies of County Councils, the Commissioners of Supply so far as they are concerned in the Bill, and the licensing question which is not dealt with by the Bill. The Government have adopted the Parliamentary franchise, with the addition of female voters and Peers; but I regret that they have placed restrictions upon the service franchise, because service franchise holders do actually pay rates, though they do so indirectly. This

franchise covers a wide range of service, and a large section of miners is included, and these miners pay in rents of these houses their proportion of rates every year. There is some force, however, in the contentien that service franchise holders ought to feel the rise and fall in the rates, and it has been suggested that by some arrangement the amount of their rates should be separated from their rents. I would say, let service franchise holders have their names put upon the register as they are for Parliamentary voting purposes, do not compel them to ask for registration, and let the payment of rents and rates be kept separate. The suggestion thrown out by the President of the Local Government Board, I think, is worth consideration, that some arrangements should be made analagous to those for the compound householders in England. I trust the constituencies may be the same for the Parochial Boards and the County Councils. It is a pity the Bill should be made more difficult and complicated by two registers. My second point has reference to the Commissioners of Supply, and I do not see what is the use of maintaining these gentlemen. I have not a word to say against the Commissioners of Supply. They have performed the functions that devolved upon them in the most praiseworthy manner, and the people of Scotland are indebted to them; but we are taking away the greater part of their duties and giving it to the County Council, leaving them simply to form a Joint Committee with the Council for the purpose of stereotyping the rates now raised. I agree with my right hon. Friend (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) that this system should be done away with. I think it would simplify matters very much if, instead of stereotyping the sum paid at present by the Commissioners of Supply, one-half of the rate were in future to fall upon the landlord and the other half on the tenant, taking care, however, that the rights of existing leaseholders should be respected. From the speech made by the Lord Advocate, I do not gather that he is averse to changing the incident of rates in this manner. I do not care much about the incidence of taxation. We may make that incidence what we like; it will always come back to this, that the property is taxed, not the individual. The tax must fall back ultimately upon the property. Whether you put it in the first instance upon the tenant or upon the the landlord, the property pays in the long run. Of course, as I said before, in making this change in the incidence of taxation, the rights of tenants holdings under existing leases must be respected. The proposition can be supported by what is done in England. In England the tenants pay all the rates; in Scotland, with the exception of the Parochial Board, rates, and school fees, the landlords pay the rates. When a tenant comes to offer for a farm he takes this into account, and hence it is that farms in England are supposed to be lower rented than farms in Scotland. But this is simply because in England the tenant pays the rates to a far greater extent than the tenant in Scotland does. We have express precedents for what I am suggesting in previous legislation. In 1872 the Education Act was passed, and previous to the passing of that Act the burden of taxes for education fell entirely upon the landlords; but by that Act the burden became divided between the landlord and the tenant. It cannot be demurred to this, that we propose to relieve the landlord from his share. Actually, he will not be relieved; it will simply be a change in the mode of payment. Another precedent is the "Roads" Act. Before that Act was passed the tolls, turnpikes, and statute labour roads were paid principally by tenants, but that Act divided the expenditure between tenants and landlords. In this instance the tenants were relieved, but not the landlords, because I think I am not beyond the mark when I say that at the present time the landlords pay three or four times more for the maintenance of roads than they did before the Roads Act passed. Having these two precedents, why should not we follow them? We insist upon retaining Commissioners of Supply with the effect of stereotyping the present rate. You might as well stereotype the sums paid by the heritors for schools, or sums for statute labour by the tenants; undoubtedly it will simplify matters very much to divide rates as suggested. My next point is with reference to licenses. Very little has been said on this during the debate; but we were told by the Lord

Mr. M'Lagan

Advocate in his introductory speech that, speaking generally, the purpose of the Bill was to extend Municipal Government to counties. Well, if you are going to extend Municipal Government to counties, why not give County Councils power and authority for licensing such as is enjoyed in burghs. Of course, to do this you require to elect a certain number of Magistrates to the Council in the same way as at the present time they serve in burghs for licensing purposes. It is said that the system has failed in burghs, but that is not on account of the local Magistrates and their administration; it is due to County Magistrates to whom decisions have been appealed. The local Magistrates have given effect to the wishes of the people; the County Magistrates have not done so, and the result has been the granting of many licenses we think should not have been granted, and much popular dissatisfaction. I have no fear of the result of extending Municipal Government to counties in this particular, nor can I see any ground for making a distinction between County Councils and Town Councils. It is a point, I think, we should insist upon, that the new County Councils should have all the powers at present enjoyed by the Justices in burghs. There is another point not to be overlooked. We should endeavour, if licences are to be granted by County Councils, to provide that the duty arising from licenses for the sale of intoxicating liquors should, if possible, be taken out of the rates and paid into the Consolidated Fund. For if we are to have County Council licenses there will be a tendency to encourage the issue of licenses for the sake of reducing the rates. I have nothing further to say at this stage, much remains to be disposed of in Committee, and I hope the result of our discussion will be that we shall be prepared to address ourselves to the task of making this as efficient a measure as it is possible.

DR. McDONALD (Ross and Cromarty): I desire to refer to one or two points, but I will not emphasize or dwell upon them. In common with other Scotch Members I have received representations from my constituents, and representations running pretty much in the same groove. In the first place they desire one roll of voters for all electoral purposes. That is a point they put in the foreground of their representations. Another point my constituents are very strong upon is the service franchise without restrictions. They also wish the County Councils should have the control of education, the Poor Laws, licensing, the making of roads, the buying of land and allotting it to the people, the making of piers and harbours, and the levying of dues for the use of them. Another point particularly desired by the people in the Highlands is that the expenses of members in coming from great distances to attend the meetings of the County Councils should be paid. The Lord Advocate said just now he thought that though we urged fully various matters under the County Council, we did not formulate any plan of how the duties were to be discharged. But surely the right hon. Gentleman remembers there are to be District or Parochial Councils, and there could be nothing simpler than to place educational matters in the hands of the Parish Council. I do not anticipate there would be any difficulty. There is one point I do not think has yet been touched, a small point the Lord Advocate might take into consideration between now and the Committee stage, and that is putting the charge of churchyards on the County Councils. They are now in the hands of the Charities, but I think the County Council would be the proper body to have control. The feeling in my constituency is strongly in favour of abolishing the Board of Supervision. They say the Board of Supervision is a "one-horse chaise," that it is one man who has control of the whole of the Local Boards of Scotland, and they object to this very much indeed. We know from information that has been put before us in this House, that the Board of Supervision is practically one man. There is another, to us, important point on which much has not been said, the question of single and double member's constituencies. From some parts of Inverness it might be necessary for a councillor to travel 130 miles to attend a Council meeting, and in bad weather it might often be that the district would be unrepresented at the Council for weeks together. I would suggest to the

Government that they should extend to the Highlands similar exceptional treatment to that which they propose to allow Orkney and Shetland The people are willing that the out-of-pocket expense of going immense distances to the Council Meetings should be borne by the rates. Furthermore it is held to be objectionable to risk the break in continuity involved in all the members of a County Council retiring at the same time. It would be far better that one-third of the members should retire annually, as in the case of the English Councils. The simultaneous retirement of all members would produce a state of chaos, and place new members at the mercy of the permanent staff. The last point to which I would refer is one upon which I have already had a conversation with the Lord Advocate. In my county, which is called "Ross and Cromarty," there are two Divisions. Cromarty is only a tongue of land, yet it has Commissioners of Supply. I think it would be better that the two Divisions should be dealt with as one county.

*Sir G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): Mr. Speaker, after the Lord Advocate had made his speech in introducing the Bill, I expressed a difference of opinion on the subject, and I may say that since I have seen the Bill I am of the same opinion, only more so. Though the Bill contains a good principle of representation, as I have said before, it is a very small measure. The English Local Government Bill was brought in with a great flourish of trumpets, and it was proposed to give large powers to the County Councils. In the course of the discussion those powers evaporated in one clause, which gave the several Departments of the Government the power to spare some of their powers to the County Council. And I am very much disappointed that in this Scotch Bill we have the same clause that we had in the English Bill, except that the time of the transference of the powers to the County Council is more indefinite. It seems to me that the powers of the Scotch County Councils are very small indeed, so small that when they have delegated to the District Councils their functions relating to roads, they will have nothing to look after but the lunatic asylums. Some hon. Members have expressed the hope that larger powers will be given to the County Councils and taken away from the parishes, which have the administration of education and the Poor Law. I entirely disagree with that view. I am not in favour of centralization. I want to see as much as possible decentralization. It would, I have no doubt, be a very good thing if the County Councils had some supervision over the education of the county. But I do not sympathize with the agitation which has been got up by the schoolmasters, whose main object is simply to emancipate themselves from the control of the Parish Council, and to place themselves under a higher authority. I do not approve, therefore, of giving to the County Council powers which are now well exercised by the Parish Boards in Scotland. With regard to the centralization of the Poor Law, I cannot help feeling that its administration by the District Council is the English Union under another name; it would be an imitation of the English system, which we do not like in Scotland. Though there may be defects in the Scotch Poor Law system, still upon the whole I think it is kindlier and more effective than the English system, and for the money expended greater relief is afforded. I should be very sorry indeed to see a transformation of the Scotch Poor Law system into the English system. To that extent I am jealous of seeing the District Council entrusted with the administration of the Poor Law. As regards the transfer of the powers of sanitation, also, I view with very great jealousy the proposals of this Bill to abolish altogether the administrative functions of the Parochial Boards, and the transfer of those functions to the District Councils. I have no doubt there is a great deal to be said in regard to the want of sanitation as exercised by some of the rural Poor Law Authorities. There are gentlemen who are very keen for an excessive amount of sanitary provisions. They would establish a kind of sanitary despotism, and I admit that in some instances too little is done. Still I should be very unwilling to transfer the powers of these authorities to the district Councils, or to see them in any degree centralised. I wish very much to see rural life take the communal form; I want to see every village administer its own affairs, as in other parts of the world. Although many

parishes may be so rural, or so small in numbers and area as not to afford sufficient basis for such a form of self-government, yet there are considerable places, many of them having no organization of their own. A good many considerable places until recently had no municipal powers, and many have not got them yet. I view with very considerable regret the absorption of all the powers under the County Council. I have much sympathy with the petitions and remonstrances which have been addressed to this House on the part of these very considerable Parish Authorities, who very much dread that their control of their own affairs, including sanitation and other matters, should be taken away from them. I do hope before this Bill leaves the House that we may have some provision by which village government may be established, and we must not give way to these sanitary people by establishing a Central Sanitary Authority. Well, then, with regard to the subject of the franchise. I join with almost every Scotch Member, on both sides of the House, in regretting that the Government have not seen their way to putting the franchise of the County Council on the same footing as the Parliamentary franchise. That would have simplified matters in every way. Of course, the great bone of contention is the service franchise. I think the view that the service franchisemen would overwhelm the other voters is an entire mistake in fact. I have looked over the valuation roll of the county of Fife, where, perhaps, more than in any other county of Scotland, the service franchise prevails. I admit I was greatly surprised to find such a very large number of service franchisemen, and, compared with the farmers, no doubt they are in very much larger numbers than the farmers, whom no doubt they would overwhelm if you looked at the farmers only. I find in the Cupar district of the county of Fife that there are 260 farms, on which there are 728 service-holders. But on the other hand there are altogether 6,469 subjects numbered on the valuation roll of that particular part. In the Cupar district I find that out of upwards of 5,000 voters there are about 990 who would come under the service franchise, or something less than 20 per cent of the whole; consequently it is an entire mistake to suppose that they will swamp the other voters. On the contrary it seems to me that in justice to the agricultural interest these agricultural service holders ought to have votes, because if you exclude them the agricultural influence of the farmers and the lairds will be entirely overwhelmed by the people in the villages. Not only is the county of Fife a fair specimen to adduce, but I think that every county north of the Forth would be at least as favourable to my argument. The same thing may, I believe, be said of the southern counties, where probably the greatest tendency to a predominance of service holders would be found in Berwickshire. I think it would greatly simplify the Bill if the Government would consent to put the franchise for the County Councils on the same footing as the Parliamentary franchise. I think it would also be desirable if, at the same time, the women's franchise could be omitted from the Bill; though as the Government propose to admit women I suppose they must be included. I trust, however, that the Lord Advocate has not left any loop-hole in the measure by which he women can creep in to the Council, and I hope that before the Bill passes this House we shall have an assurance that no loop-hole of that kind has been overlooked. With regard to the question of education, I can only join in the chorus of general satisfaction expressed as to the proposals of the Government as far as they go. Congratulations have been offered to the hon. Member for Aberdeen. When he proposed to vote this money for free education I confess the proposition was new to me, and I took several seconds to consider it; but after I had given it that consideration I had no hesitation in appending my name to it. The way in which the proposal of the Government has been received in Scotland is surprising. It has been hailed with the greatest enthusiasm by the Scottish people. The subject has always been with them a popular one, but until recently I had no idea how popular it really was. The people of Scotland rushed, as it were, to express their approbation of it, and it is clear to me that the Government have now taken a step from which they cannot go back. They

will not only have to carry out the proposal already made, but they will have to go much further in order to make elementary education altogether free. It is not for me to go into the question as to the mode in which the money is to be provided; but I repeat that the Government having committed themselves so far cannot possibly go back. It will be impossible for them to free the first three stages of elementary education and to impose high fees in the remaining stages. To do this would be to put a penalty on the poor man who tries to give his boy the opportunity of acquiring a decent education, and it may be said that some of those who would be unable to pay the fees for the higher standards might say to their children—"Take care you do not go beyond the Third Standard, because I cannot afford to pay for the standards beyond that." I feel assured that when the proposal of the Government has been adopted, England will follow suit in declaring the necessity of freeing elementary education. With regard to the question of the supervision of the police, it seems to me that the matter stands in a different position in Scotland to that which it occupies in England. In England there is no one corresponding to our Scotch Sheriff. The Justices of the Peace are the commanders of the police in England, but in Scotland the Sheriff is the real head of the police. Under the circumstances, I see no objection to giving the function of finding the ways and means to the County Authorities. It is totally unnecessary to keep up a division merely as regards the supply of ways and means. As to the control of loans, it is clear that somebody must control them. I think it a dangerous thing to allow the people of this generation to lay heavy burdens on the next. I have every confidence in public bodies so long as they have to provide the payment for the improvements they make, but I object to the authorities of the present day putting too much on the shoulders of those who are to come. If you get rid of the Commissioners of Supply, some other authority will have to be substituted in order that a check may be placed on the abuse of the power of borrowing money. There is one question in which I am a good deal interested. I allude to the small burghs of less than 7,000 population, mentioned in this Bill. I confess I am not quite able to understand the Bill in regard to this matter, and I shall reserve my opinion as to its effects on the small burghs until the question can be threshed out in Committee. I hope to see the County Councils invested with much larger powers than they are to receive under this Bill as it now stands, so that by their action we may be able to do away, to some extent at least, with the congestion of business in this House. I want to see in the County Councils large and dignified bodies, and should think it advisable for this purpoee to unite the counties of Fife, Ross, and Clackmannan, those of Forfar and Kincardine, and the smaller counties also between Banff and Inverness. These are the only points to which I wish to refer in regard to the Bill itself. Allusion has been made to the Burgh Police Bill, and I must say that I cannot concur in the regret which has been expressed at its failure to pass into law. I think it must be reduced to about one-tenth of its present size before it will become an acceptable Bill. I only wish to add, as regards the future course of this Bill, that I regret the Government have intimated that they mean to reject the reasonable and moderate proposal which has been made to submit it to a Committee in which the Scotch Members shall have a preponderating voice. The Government evidently desire to refer to a Committee on which Scotch Members will be a minority, and I think we are bound to resist that proposal to the uttermost. We shall have to consider whether we can give the Bill a Second Reading in the absence of any understanding with the Government on this point. I believe the Bill contains a good principle, but that principle is not sufficiently developed, and I hope that in Committee we shall be able to improve it to a very considerable extent. I should like to see the Scotch Members have a very considerable share in shaping this Bill into a proper form.

MR. P. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E): Sir, when this Bill was introduced, I joined in the general chorus of satisfaction and pleasure at hearing the Liberal speech delivered by the learned Lord Advocate on the occasion; and since I have seen the Bill, I have not lessened in one iota my admiration of

that speech, for I cannot too much admire the way in which the Lord Advocate was enabled to make so little go so far. The Bill, so far as I am able to analyze it, does not in itself contain anything more than a good groundwork for future operations; and before I deal with the measure, perhaps I may be allowed to say a word or two in regard to the administration of the police. I have had for twenty years the administration of a large force of police, and the learned Lord Advocate was scarcely accurate in saying that in any burgh the control of the police is under the Lord Provost and Sheriff. The burghs in Scotland have accepted from the Government half of the pay for the administration of the police, and in doing so they have very properly submitted that the Government should have a representative who has a voice in the administration of the force. The Sheriff is the representative of the Government in that matter, and he certainly has a voice in the appointment of superintendents of police. The usual course in burghs is this: The choice of a superintendent is made by the Magistrates and Provost, while the Sheriff, on behalf of the Government, satisfies himself that the appointment is a satisfactory one, and he gives his approbation or disapprobation in regard to it. But a most important function comes in in the administration by a Town Council, which has practically power over the police. They settle what the number of the force shall be, and they provide the means for their appointment, and having as a Council the ways and means to provide, they have an active, wholesome, and necessary control over the police. It is quite well-known that in all large towns there is what is called a Police Committee, who have not perhaps the appointment of the Superintendent, but they have, in point of fact, a very considerable control over the police administration. That being so, I submit to the learned Lord Advocate whether there is any necessity whatsoever for departing from the arrangement which has worked so well in the large burghs, of allowing the control of the police, subject to the same restrictions and regulations, to be put under the County Council. Now, Sir, speaking for that part of the country with which I am best acquainted, I would put it to the Lord Advocate whether, in respect to the city and county of Aberdeen, or in respect to any city situate in any county in Scotland, there is not in the cities more abundantly that kind of population which it might be, at least in the eyes of any Conservative Administrator, less desirable to entrust with the control of the police than the population in the counties. You have gathering together in the large cities a very large population. I think that any fear which might have existed in the mind of anyone as to giving the control of the police to popularly-elected bodies would have developed itself in large cities had it existed anywhere whatsoever; and seeing that the system has worked eminently satisfactorily in all large burghs throughout Scotland, I cannot see why there should be any fear of giving that administration which Town Councils now have to County Councils in the country. Now, Sir, there is one part of this Bill in which my hon. Colleague the Member for West Aberdeenshire has a very deep interest, and that is with regard to the service franchise. Now, I do not take upon myself to speak for the mining population. In the North of Scotland we have no mining population, but still we have a large service vote. We have agricultural labourers of a class which I hope I may, without disrespect to any part of the country, describe as the most intelligent, the most law-abiding, and the most solid and respectable class of agricultural labourers that is to be found in any part of the kingdom. These agricultural labourers were for a very long time denied all rights of citizenship; but in 1885 we admitted them to the Imperial franchise. Now, the agricultural labourer is less interested, if I may say so, in the Imperial Government of the country than he is in his local citizenship, and I deprecate in strong terms the action of the Lord Advocate in permitting this Bill to put a disability upon the agricultural labourers in Scotland and upon the service vote in the counties of Scotland which it does not deserve, for the labourer has proved himself throughout the country a law-abiding and God-fearing citizen. He has done his duty to the country by hard labour and by reclaiming from the wastes of Scotland

productive land; he has been a person who, in many cases, has raised himself from the position of an agricultural labourer to be a small holder, and in a few cases a considerable farmer; and I ask what the service vote has done, what the agricultural labourer in the large county of Aberdeenshire has done, that under this Local Government Bill he should be treated as a person who is not to be trusted in the administration of local affairs? Now, Sir, I entirely agree with my hon. Friend the Member for the Partick Division of Lanarkshire in saying that he is a taxpayer. I challenge the Solicitor General for Scotland to say whether I am not right when I put it to the House in this way. We have three classes of agricultural labourers; we have the labourer who lives in the village and has there his wife and children; you cannot deprive him of his vote. You have the class of agricultural labourer who has his cottage provided for him on the farm; he can probably secure his vote by asking to be put upon the renting franchise; and with regard to the wages of these men, the man who has no house provided for him is more highly paid, while he who has a house provided for him on the farm certainly has the value of his house deducted from his wages; therefore his rent is paid for him through the farmer, because undoubtedly the farmer takes it into consideration when he makes the engagement with the man. But we have another class of agricultural labourer in Aberdeenshire. We have the farmer who provides accommodation for unmarried servants on the farm; they have the use of the kitchen and probably of a sleeping department, and this is counted in the wages. Through the employer they labour for they pay taxes, and if you admit these men to the Imperial franchise, I am sure there is no hon. Member in this House representing country constituencies who could with any force and with conscienctous conviction say that they are not fit to be admitted into citizenship and to have the franchise vote. I hope that the learned Lord Advocate and those associated with him in the promotion of the Bill will favourably consider this matter and give the service franchise. Now, Sir, I have said that this Bill is to me disappointing in its extent. I understood that an attempt was to be made to reduce the number of administrative bodies in the counties and to simplify the collection of taxes and thereby secure a more efficient administration and more economy in the management of county affairs. Well, Sir, I find that in this Bill we do away with the Road Board and also with the Administrative Board selected in regard to the Contagious Diseases Animals Act. We have, then, so far as I can see, taken away two Administrative Boards; but in taking them away, what do we put in place of them? Raised up in place of the Boards we are taking away we have two other Boards, the Local Government Board, and a Hybrid Board consisting partly of proprietors, partly of the representatives of proprietors, and partly of representatives of the tenants. We have, therefore, no reduction whatever, and we have only got a much more complicated machinery in the place of the two Boards which we have done away with. We have also departed from what I believed to be one of the main objects of the County Council Bill—namely, the simplification of the register. It was hoped we should get a simple register instead of one of complexity; but this Bill by no means simplifies matters. Now, Sir, I should like to notice one or two things which I think are very important, and which are not dealt with in this Bill. When the Liberal Government were in power I frequently had to call attention to what I think is a scandal on the East Coast of Scotland, and that is the tenure of the fisherman's buildings along the coast. I was told from time to time that this matter could not be dealt with in the Crofters Bill or in any other Bill before the House; but that the proper time to raise it would be on the Local Government Bill. But, Sir, now the Bill has been brought in, I find no notice whatever of this important subject in the Bill. I am sure the Lord Advocate could not have been in the North-East of Scotland without noticing that this is a subject which must be dealt with in the near future, and I want him to say why he has not dealt with it in this Bill. Then, Sir, we have at any rate in Aberdeenshire another important subject to which we wish attention to be given, and that is the question of allotments for agricultural labourers.

I am sorry to see that there is no provision in this Bill for the County Council to deal with the question of allotments. It is a question which, indeed, affects every county. Circumstances differ in different counties throughout the country, and I am not sure the right hon. Gentleman would be able to introduce any measure which could have a general application to the different counties, and therefore I think it would have been an immense improvement if the County Councils in Scotland had had power given to them to deal with this subject. And there is another important branch of this subject. I thought there was considerable excuse for the Lord Advocate in not dealing with the subject of education. I have had many petitions, many letters, and many overtures with regard to putting education in the counties under County Councils, and when the Bill was brought in I admitted that the subject of education was one of such extent that there was considerable excuse for its omission from the measure. But although I admitted that general fact, I must say I can see no reason whatever, seeing that the Lord Advocate has dealt with Parochial Boards, why he should not have considered the propriety of putting together the administration of the Poor Law and of education. I do not think that there is any such difference between the administration of education in Scotland and the administration of the Poor Law, as should have kept these two subjects asunder, if they were not to be dealt with in the general County Council. Now, Sir, I said before, and I now repeat, that on behalf of my constituency, I have the strongest possible desire that we, as representatives of Scotch constituencies, should give every possible assistance in making this Bill as good and as satisfactory as possible. I deprecate very strongly that we should merely set up a shadow of a great administration, and that it should be necessary to carry on the agitation with regard to the service franchise and with regard to the administration of education. I hope, indeed, in regard to these subjects that the representations which will come from the constituencies will be so powerful and so unanimous in favour of widening the scope of this Bill, that the Lord Advocate may be induced to keep an open mind upon the subject. There is great indifference of feeling in regard to all parts of this Bill, with the exception of education. On that matter there is a universally keen feeling, and I think it would be well worth while for the Government to consider whether they cannot at any rate extend their proposals on this point. Still, if nothing more is done by this Bill than the giving of free education to the three lower standards, the measure would have been well worth introducing. But I do appeal to the learned Lord Advocate, if he does not want Scotland to lag behind in the matter of education, not to stop at three standards, but extend the gift to the higher classes. I quite agree with those who say that it would be infinitely better for the education of Scotland to apply the money to the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Standards than to the First, Second, and Third, the fees for which are not so heavily felt as are those of the other standards. But I hope that if it should be found impossible to provide out of Imperial funds the amount necessary to free at least the first five standards, there will be no squeamishness in saying that the localities must bear the very slight additional burden necessary to make education perfectly free to all members of society. As to the incidence of taxation, I think the Lord Advocate misrepresented my right hon. Friend the Member for Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) in saying he proposed to throw on the occupying tenants of Scotland £100,000 of additional taxation. What my right hon. Friend said was that with regard to existing leases we should allow the taxation to be paid by the landlords as it is now, but that in all future bargains both occupier and proprietor should be subject to the equitable and fair principle that local taxation should be evenly divided between them, so that each should have an interest in economy and good administration. I am quite aware that no taxation is popular, but I am not so much the partizan of either the tenants or the proprietors as to say that it is not the best interests of the country or of good administration that every one should feel the pinch of a large amount of taxation if a large amount be necessary. We understand that the Government are keeping up the Commissioners of Supply for no other purpose than to

represent the large amount of taxation paid by the proprietors, and I hope that in re-considering this matter they will put an end to the existence of the Commissioners of Supply, which ought, I think, at once and for ever to cease to exist. I hope those in charge of the Bill will keep their minds open, and that we may be able to co-operate with them in passing this Bill in such a shape that it will settle Scotch Local Government for many years to come. Although the measure has been much criticized, there has not been much difference among the Scotch Members on both sides of the House as to its main features. In fact, there is practical unanimity, and I am sure that if the Government will assist the Scotch Members to make this Bill such an one as will settle the question for many years, they will bring honour on themselves and do much to allay the feeling which I believe is growing up in this House that we are dominated by Members representing other than Scotch constituencies—a feeling which is creating a desire for Home Rule in Scotland. That desire for Home Rule can probably be averted for a considerable number of years to come if this Bill is amended in accordance with the wishes of the Scotch Members.

*Sir LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): I have delayed speaking on this Bill until the last few minutes of the Debate, for though I had the honour of being a Scotch Member for 17 years, that honour exists no longer. During the time I represented a Scotch constituency, however, I naturally took great interest in, and had some experience in, regard to Scotch education. The right hon. Gentleman the Lord Advocate rather deprecated our speaking too much on the subject of education in connection with this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman has no idea of the vast experiment he is making by this Bill in the matter of education. For the first time in this country he is making an experiment in free education. If the experiment is badly carried ont, much harm will be done to the future of education in the United Kingdom; if, on the other hand, the experiment is wisely made, an enormous benefit will result to the country. On that account I think the question of education is probably the most important part of the Bill. One would have thought that in making this experiment the Government would have, at all events, brought the experience of other countries to bear on the point. The experiments made abroad have been, except in France for the last year or two, entirely in the opposite system. In Germany, which is probably the model country for an enlightened system of education, the custom has been to make the lower standards of education entirely dependent on the localities, and not on State aid, and although it is part of the Constitution of Germany that education should be free, practically they have not been able to carry it out all over the country, and it only exists in large towns. In the country districts school fees are taken from the children. In this country, however, the reverse system has been adopted. The State has largely aided primary education, while it has done nothing for secondary education. In France, until quite recently, the State has intervened only in the upper branches of education, and has left the lower branches entirely to the locality. What has been the effect of this system in England? The result of State aid in the lower branches has been to waste the resources which we lavish with such indiscriminate zeal upon the education of the country. Any child who gets no farther than the three standards has had the money of the State spent upon him unnecessarily and wastefully. The child gets a thin veneer of education, which rubs off with the wear and tear of life in two or three years, and the education then exists no longer. And what has the State done in order to try to remedy this? We found we were wasting all our money, and we therefore brought in factory legislation, and said that no child should go to labour until it had passed Standards IV. and V. What, then, are you doing by this Bill? You are stereotyping all that is bad in our educational system by giving State aid for the lower standards. If the Government intend to confine this experiment of free education to the lower standards, it will, in my judgment, be better for Scotland to have no such grant of money given to it as is here proposed for liberating the three lower standards and leaving the upper standards uncared for, because the Government are giving this relief at a time

when fees are low and when parents are able to exercise their parental responsibility. But when the pressure becomes great in consequence of the Factory Laws, they do not aid the parents, whom they have allowed to get accustomed to pay no fees in the lower standards. Two-thirds of the children are in the lower standards, and the fees paid for them amount to £155,000. The right hon. Gentleman the Lord Advocate says that the plan of the Government is to wipe off school fees when they press most heavily. But it is not true that they press most heavily in the lower standards. The fees press least heavily when they are low and the parents are able to pay them. One-third of the children paid £161,000 in Standards V., V., and VI., as against the £155,000 paid by the two-thirds in the lower standards. Therefore, the Government are giving educational relief where it is least needed, and refusing it where it is most required. The Government are giving £16,000 plus £4,000 or £5,000, arising from educational endowments set free, or at the utmost £21,000, to assist the £161,000 which the children in the higher standards now pay. That is no great aid to the parents when they feel the pressure heaviest upon them. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) the other day said, very tersely, that the Government had to consider whether education would stop where free education stops. That is exactly what will happen. You are holding out a great inducement to stop the education of the children at the three lower standards. All children should have got through Standard III. at 10 years of age, but not less than 41 per cent of the whole number do not pass the Third Standard until they are above 10 years of age. Thus it is obvious the tendency is already to stop at the lower standards. What, I ask, would happen when the parent suddenly felt that he must pay for the higher standard out of his own pocket. Of course, the inducement would be for him to keep the child in the lower standards, where it gets the education for nothing. I think that when the Government come to look at this matter fairly, they will see that partially free education is an absurdity. They cannot stop at partially free education. They must make all the standards of primary education perfectly free, or they will injure education very much. Assuming that the Government will only give £171,000, they can still promote the education of the Scotch people in the old way, which was always to aim at a higher education. It is this higher education which has made them so successful in life all over the world. The Government can still promote education on the old lines by leaving to the parental responsibility the three lower standards, and applying the grant to the upper standards. That will be consistent with the genius and the habits of the Scotch people, and will induce them to go on with the education of their children. You know perfectly well from your education Reports that an increased stimulus is required for the upper standards. For instance, last year 55,000 children went up for examination in Standard V. There ought to have been the same number for Standard VI., but Standard VI. is no longer necessary to give exemption from labour, and only 25,000 went up for examination in that standard. The great success of our system of education has been that there has been a ladder from the gutter to the highest Universities. Every child knows that if he has talents he may go to the Universities to study, and the Universities in Scotland are the Universities of the people and not the Universities of the rich. The difference between the Scotch and the English Universities is that in the English Universities they teach the rich man to spend £1,000 a year, with dignity and intelligence: in the Scotch Universities they teach a poor man to earn £1,000 a year, with dignity and intelligence. The Government by their present proposal will cut off all the rungs of the ladder leading upwards, and may even destroy the system of education which has made Scotland a great and a happy nation.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to a Committee of the whole House."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.): I beg to move as an Amendment,

"That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee composed of all the Scottish Representatives and thirty other Members to be nominated by the Committee of Selection; that the provisions of Standing Order 50 shall apply to all Bills reported by the said Committee."

This Motion has been somewhat altered since I first placed it on the Paper. For my part I am disposed to regret that the alteration has been made. I think that 72 Scotch Members are amply sufficient upon the Committee, and that such a Committee would be sufficiently large even for a House of 670 Members. If the 72 Members were not all Scotchmen that is all the more reason for not adding any additional Members. I acknowledge that from the point of view of Parliamentary expediency there may be a great deal of weight in the proposal to add a certain number of other Members of the House to the Committee, although as a proposal has already been made and voted upon that there should be a Standing Scotch Committee for Scotch Bills, I cannot see that there was any particular reason to propose a Committee entirely composed of Scotch Members for considering the Scotch Local Government Bill. But there are other reasons which, if they have not been realized by hon. Members, will, I think, influence them in favour of a step being taken in that direction. We have not only the feeling of Scotland, which has been so well described by my hon. Friend who has just spoken, but we have before us proposals which will very seriously affect the Parliamentary and other representative institutions of the country. These proposals have hitherto, no doubt, been restricted very much to one portion of the United Kingdom, but at the same time I would say it will not do to restrict our vision altogether merely to the requirements of Ireland. The Federal idea is fast gaining ground in the country, and however varying may be the needs in the different portions of the kingdom, the policy upon which we are embarked, and from which we shall never recede, will involve attention being given to the progress of affairs and to the future of the Parliamentary system at home.

Mr. Munro Ferguson

The expediency of relieving the House of a portion of the burden of considering these Bills in Committee has already been appreciated by Her Majesty's Government, inasmuch as it has been proposed to refer No. 2 Bill to the Law Committee. The motive for doing so is not difficult to find. At first, no doubt, there was a desire to save the time of the House. That has been illustrated in the course of this Debate. Scotch Members have not had many opportunities lately of expressing their views in the House of Commons. They have been bottled up, with the result that most of them wished to speak and have spoken at very considerable length. No doubt it would be very desirable to restore the efficiency of Parliament for carrying through its work, and the Chief Secretary for Ireland gave cogent reasons in favour of a reference of this nature when he said he looked at the measure from the point of view of Scotland, and that it should be passed into law taking into consideration the wants of that particular part of the kingdom. The reasons against a Committee of the whole House are numerous. There will be a vast and unnecessary expenditure of time on a Local Scotch Bill, a subject which in many of its details, if not, indeed, in its entirety, does not seem to command the sympathy of Members of nationalities other than the Scotch. When this Debate was initiated by the admirable speech of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) I do not think there were a dozen men of other than Scotch nationality in the House, and since then it has been a steadily diminishing quantity. The system of Scotch Local Government is entirely different from that of England, and as has been pointed out over and over again English Members would be entirely at sea in considering the details of Scotch Local Government. So far as the attendance of English Members is concerned it will be largely increased a little later on, but that not so much for the sake of looking after Scotch affairs as because of the prevalence of the idea that a modification of the Standing Order may imperil the dignity of Parliament and the unity of the Empire. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House frequently refers to a desire on the part of the Government to

get on with their work, and now we offer the Government an opportunity for their doing so. We make this proposition entirely in the interest of the Government. If we wished to obstruct we should certainly hold for a Committee of the whole House, which I think must have been devised for the purpose of obstruction. If our proposition made in the interest of public business be rejected, then the waste of time and the inevitable failure of Parliament to undertake questions requiring settlement for the legitimate demands of the whole country will rest on the head of an incompetent Administration. Assuming that this devolution is desirable on this subject, what are the alternatives to the proposals now made? A Select Committee to consist entirely of Scotch Members would be of almost unheard of size, but there is absolutely no use in doing the same work twice over, and probably if the Committee did not include all the Scotch Members, we should have those who were excluded taking advantage of the return of the Bill to this House to reconsider its details. I myself should have been glad enough to have escaped from the Committee work on the English Local Government Bill, and I am not sure that anything I did or said at all influenced the character of that measure. But I do not think the Government would have been prepared to exclude any English Member from the discussion on that Bill, and yet it is equivalent to what they are now proposing to do as regards the Scotch Bill. The Supplementary Bill, Bill No. 2, is to be referred to a Select Committee on Law, upon which there are about nine Scotch Members, and two of them I am sure were not born north of the Tweed. I will not go into the question of Standing Committees, but let any hon. Member look at the list of the Committees and he will find that perhaps half of the Members have never been to Scotland, and know nothing of the country. Another objection to the Standing Committee is that the discussions are imperfectly reported, and we should have questions decided by a body of Members prejudiced against the sentiment dominant in Scotland, or incapable of judging between the majority and minority of Scotch Members. On this side of the House there will be the most strenuous opposition to any proposal, to refer any portion of these Bills to a Standing Committee of this character. If this Motion is not accepted by the Government, we shall demand a Committee of the whole House, where at all events every Scotch Member can speak and vote, and where at all events the debate will be followed, and in this case the waste of time must fall on the shoulders of the Government. The advantages of accepting my motion are apparent. We hold this to be a question exclusively Scottish in its character, in which Scottish Members alone are interested, and the details of which they alone are capable of judging. We relieve the House of an unnecessary burden. Scotch business will be efficiently despatched, and the Scottish people will have the satisfaction of knowing that the Bill is laid before the House in a form a majority of their representatives approve. In spite of all these advantages to the Scotch people, all the peculiarities of a centralized system so deeply cherished by Her Majesty's Government would be preserved, because the Report of the Committee being made to the House, the majority of the House may treat that Report as they are disposed. In my opinion the Government will incur very serious responsibility if they reject this proposition. There are some Members on this side of the House who would not be sorry to see the Government reject this Motion, because there is a large section in Scotland which demands very much more extreme measures in relation to the conduct of Scottish affairs, who desire that public feeling in Scotland should be still more aroused in order that still more drastic remedies may be applied, and in view of the attitude the Government have assumed towards our affairs, these extremes we should not be at all loth to support. But you can make a concession to our wishes and advance Scotch affairs without violation to the most cherished prejudices of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I have said the Government will incur great responsibility by the rejection of this proposal, and a larger amount of responsibility will rest upon those Liberal Members who sitting on this side support the Government. It will be interesting to know what reasons they can urge against the proposal, for

I do not know that the result of any recent elections in the North justify their opposition. It may be urged that such a Motion constitutes a danger to a strong central legislative and executive control, that it is inconsistent with the maintenance of that control, that it is a revival of the Heptarchy, and so forth. Hon. Members who take that view are very fond of talking about Imperial interests, and the greatness of the Empire is their stock pot from which they draw material for their speeches in the country, but how can Imperial affairs be adequately attended to if this House is made the cockpit of every trifling local concern? I shall be curious to know what chimera it is that floats across the ideas of those who fear the results of local control. If England and Ireland have done their share in building up the Empire, I may claim that Scotland has done more than her proportion. Governors and great captains have been sent from Scotland and have successfully conducted great Imperial affairs in all quarters of the globe. There is no part of the United Kingdom where the British flag is more thoroughly upheld, where hope in the great destiny of the great English-speaking race is more firmly planted, than in Scotland. But we recognise in the North that for the Empire to be sound there must be soundness to the core, and no difficulties of internal administration and efficiency. It is in the belief that these aims may be achieved and our historical position maintained that we, the people of Scotland, demand the fullest freedom for internal usefulness, not only for ourselves, but in the interest of everypart of the United Kingdom.

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out the words 'Committee of the whole House,' in order to add the words 'Select Committee composed of all the Scottish Representatives and Thirty other Members to be nominated by the Committee of Selection.

"That the provisions of Standing Order 50 shall apply to all Bills reported by the said Committee."—(*Mr. Munro Ferguson.*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question."

Mr. Munro Ferguson

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries): In a very few words I desire to second the Amendment of my hon. Friend. What we wish to avert by this Motion is the practice of English Members coming in, not having taken part in and not having heard the debate, and, upon important questions affecting our own country, voting us down though we express almost unanimously the sentiment of the people of Scotland whom we represent. I am sorry to say this practice has been adopted in this Parliament more frequently than in former Parliaments, and I am confident that out of it has arisen much dissatisfaction in Scotland. The proposal of my hon. Friend has been modified from its original scope, and I for one regret the modification. It is not that I doubt the ability and straightforwardness of English Members who will be added to the Committee; on the contrary, I should hail the presence of English Members on all general questions, but this is pre-eminently a Scotch question, dealing with matters that those unconnected with Scotland are not likely even to understand. I am persuaded that most English Members would frankly admit that the mere terminology in connection with these Bills is unintelligible to them, and I am sure they do not appreciate the distinctions between English and Scottish Local Government. Further, let me point out this, that the proposal before the House does not prejudice the full control of the House in the matter. If a Committee of Scottish Members were to report on the Bill in a sense different from that of the whole House, it would be in the power of the House to make changes on Report, but there will be the great advantage of having the deliberate opinion of the Scottish Members on the subject, and I think from that, definitely pronounced, the House would not see fit to differ. Only two objections can be raised to the proposal of my hon. Friend. The first is that the example might be dangerous, and that the claim might be made for Irish measures to be treated in the same manner. I admit that would be very likely to ensue, but let me also point out how flagrantly unjust it is to deny to

Scotland what is expedient for such a settled, law-abiding country, because a different state of things exists in Ireland! The second objection is the fear that the Bill—which the best possible advocacy cannot describe as very advanced—might be turned by the Scottish Members into a formidable reality. No doubt the treatment of the liquor traffic, free education, and elective justices would be carried among the Scottish Members by a majority of at least three to one. But here again, if the majority of the representatives of Scotland wish for such measures, why should they be prevented from obtaining them by the majority of English Members? It is a fact that there is a growing feeling in Scotland of discontent and dissatisfaction at the continual overriding of the wishes of the Scottish Members, and the question of Home Rule for Scotland has grown enormously in popularity in consequence. I am perfectly aware that the extension of the system of delegation of public business may lead, and probably will lead, to some measure of this character being adopted before long, and I, for my part, am very willing to see it adopted, but what I do not desire to see is a feeling of this kind fostered by a sense of injustice and neglect, with a sense that the affairs of Scotland are managed without due regard to the opinions of her representatives. For this reason I support the Motion of my hon. Friend. I wish he had left it in its original form, but even in its mutilated condition it is sufficient to attract my sympathy and support.

*MR. SHAW-STEWART (Renfrew): I will not yield to the temptation offered by hon. Gentlemen opposite to diverge into a Home Rule debate, though it is a tempting subject, and neither of the hon. Members who have spoken have been able to entirely avoid trenching upon it. But the hon. Gentleman who moved this Motion showed by the argument he used how very difficult it is to decide what are matters that concern Scotland alone and matters that require the attention of Parliament generally. The hon. Member spoke of Scotch Members who lived in Scotland, but there are Scottish Members in the House who are not connected with Scotland by birth or by domicile, while there are a number of Scottish Gentlemen representing English constituencies. The hon. and learned Member for Dumfries is far more logical in the position he takes up, he wishes the Bill to be reserved to a Committee of Scotch Members, whereas the hon. Member for Leith would add 30 other Members. But he has given us no reason why the magical number of 30 should be added to the Committee. He has given us no reason why his proposal is better than the proposal of the Government, which, indeed, is the much more likely of the two to conduce to a rapid and amicable settlement of the question. When the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland spoke of the Bill being regarded from a Scottish point of view he was speaking of the inception of the measure. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR assented.] I presume he was speaking of the manner in which the measure had been drawn up from a purely Scottish point of view. But nobody will deny there are principles involved in the measure which are of wider import than even the question of Scottish nationality and questions that touch very closely on matters of Imperial importance such as control of the police and so forth. I suppose my hon. Friends opposite who wish this Bill to be referred to a Committee of Scotch Members have not forgotten that the majority of the Scottish Members in the present Parliament sit on the Opposition side of the House. The result of a Committee of the Scottish Members, therefore, might be to insert Amendments in the Bill which would alter its complexion entirely, and on the report to the House interminable debates would inevitably ensue. That is a contingency some hon. Members look forward to with favour. I am afraid there are some hon. Members who, although we have passed the Second Reading without Division, they do not wish to see these Bills passed into law as rapidly as some of us would wish. I have to look for some reason for this Motion, and I can only suppose they think that the Bills

are too good for a Conservative Government to pass. I have a shrewd suspicion that some hon. Members opposite would like to go down to their constituents in Scotland and say "The Unionist Government have proposed this miserable Bill for Scotland; we will give you a good Bill." You do not like the idea of our bringing in this Bill which is for the good of Scotland. That is the only interpretation I can put on the action of the hon. Gentlemen, and judging by their demeanour at the present time I feel I am not far wrong in my suspicion. An hon. Member spoke of the deeds of Scotland adding lustre to the British Empire. That is very true, but he ought to remember that the Scottish deeds of which we are so proud have become more vividly impressed upon us because they have added lustre to the British Empire. The proposal of the hon. Member for Leith is that the Bill be committed to a Committee of the Scottish Members with the addition of 30 other Members. The Government proposal is that the principal Bill be discussed in Committee of the whole House, where, we hope, it will be discussed with advantage to the people of Scotland. We do not want to make Party capital out of these Bills. We do not want to go to Scotland and say it is a Unionist Government alone that has done this for you. We desire an improvement in the Local Government of Scotland. We hope hon. Gentlemen will assist us in giving an extended system of Local Government to the people of Scotland, and we trust that in the word people will be included all classes, landlords and tenants, occupiers and service men.

*MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw-Stewart) has disclaimed any desire to point out to the people of Scotland that it is the Unionist Government that has given them this Bill. I am afraid that if he takes up that attitude he is hardly following the lead of the Lord Advocate. The hon. and learned Gentleman speaks in a very different manner outside the House in the speech at Millport, which has been already alluded to. He congratulated the Unionists on its having been shown that their policy could not be rivalled by any proposition on the other side of the House. I think the criticism to which the Bill has been exposed shows how far the measure deserves the encomiums which the hon. and learned Gentleman showered upon it in his speech. Now, the Motion before the House is proposed with the object of saving time and making the Bill such that it will commend itself to those it directly concerns—namely, the Scottish people. The Government suggest that the first Bill, one consisting of 34 clauses, should be reserved for the Committee of the whole House, but that the second Bill, a measure of 70 odd clauses, should go to the Grand Committee on Law. Undoubtedly, to get the first Bill through the whole House will take a very considerable time. Indeed there is no reason to suppose less time will be occupied than was taken up by the discussion upon the Local Government Bill of last year. And then, if the second Bill is considered by the Grand Committee on Law, many points already considered in the House will again be discussed in the Committee, and the Bill will ultimately have to come before the House, and no doubt many important points will be raised a second time. Time, therefore, will be saved by adopting the proposal of the hon. Member for Leith. Again, I should like to recall to hon. Members what will be the constitution of the two rival Committees. The hon. Member for Leith proposes to establish a Committee of 102 Members, of whom 72 shall be Scotch Members and 30 English, Irish, and Welsh Members. The Scotch Members would be in the proportion of two to one. The Grand Committee on Law consists of 68 Members, and of these only nine are Scotch Members. It is proposed to add 15 Scotch representatives, so that you will only have 24 Scotch Members out of 83. The proportion of the Scottish representatives upon the Grand Committee on Law would therefore be very different indeed from what we should find it on the Committee proposed by the hon. Member for Leith. Unquestionably, to get a free expression of Scottish opinion the Committee of the whole House would be infinitely more satisfactory than in a Select Committee. Although we may be outvoted in the House, we shall all have an opportunity of sitting on the Committee of the whole

House and of expressing our opinions on the various Amendments, instead of being merely one-third of a Grand Committee, the reports of the proceedings of which will be very limited. But still more, if you send this Bill to the Committee suggested by my hon. Friend, will you get a better expression of Scotch opinion.

*MR. A. GATHORNE HARDY (Sussex, East Grinstead): I hope the House will bear with me for a few moments, if I, although an Englishman, take part in this discussion. I should not have thought of taking part in the Second Reading debate of a Scotch Bill; but if it be proposed that this Bill shall be discussed in Committee by Scotch Members alone, I cannot think that the question is one on which English Members have not a right to be heard, and I will, therefore, give the reasons why I am personally averse to this proposal. I have always been a strong supporter of Local Government, and I desire not only that there should be a wide and far-reaching system of local government in Scotland, but that it should in all its machinery carry out the wishes of the majority of the Scotch Members. But notwithstanding that admission, I cannot conceive that it is the right of the Scotch Members in the framing of a Local Government Bill of this description to have what I may call an exclusive voice, or such a preponderating voice that it would become exclusive, in settling the details of the measure. It seems to me that, whatever may be the details of a Local Government Bill, it is impossible for any country or any part of a country to frame a Local Government Bill for itself without trenching largely on what may be called imperial questions. There are in every country imperial questions and local questions, and it is a simple subtraction sum to say that if you take the local questions away the imperial questions will remain. If that is so, surely the corollary follows, that if a Local Government Bill is to be framed, and one particular part of the Empire is to decide what questions are to be given to that locality to determine, it must rest with them and them alone to decide whether or not they trench on those imperial questions which I for one desire always to retain in the hands of the Imperial Parliament. I do not desire to say much. The arguments on the other side have been very brief indeed—I think far too brief considering the magnitude of the questions raised by the Amendment. I do not wish to say anything disrespectful to the mover and seconder of the Motion, and the hon. Gentlemen who have supported them, but really they have advanced little or no argument in support of their propsition; and I venture to say also, they have merely travestied the arguments which those who oppose their proposition are likely to put forward. I do not think we are going to deal with this question simply on the ground of a saving of time, or that we are going to talk about reviving the Heptarchy which they said was the strongest argument on this side. We are not going to talk seriously about that, and I am not going to raise such an argument; but I should like, if I may, just for a few minutes, as far as possible show how far the practice of these hon. Gentlemen who have brought forward this proposition coincides with their theory. We have had, during the last Session of Parliament, a very prolonged discussion in Committee upon the English Local Government Bill, and according to the theory of the hon. Gentlemen who sit opposite I presume that if they and the Irish Members who sit below the Gangway are entitled for themselves to frame a local Government Bill in its main lines for Ireland and for Scotland, they would also conceive that it would be the right of English Members to frame a Local Government Bill for England. [*Cheers.*] I am glad to hear the cheers of the hon. Gentlemen opposite; but as far as my researches have gone, I cannot say that their practice bears out their theory. We had a long discussion in Committee upon the Local Government Bill for England. I am not now dealing with the Second Reading, nor am I dealing with large questions of principle. I am dealing rather, in the main, with those questions of machinery which we dealt with in the earlier clauses, and I have taken the trouble to examine to some

extent into the part which Irish and Scotch Members took in the discussion and in the Divisions on the measure. We had in Committee 69 Divisions, in regard of the whole of which I shall not trouble the House. I think it sufficient for my purpose if I take the earliest 12 Divisions which we took in Committee of the whole House. I pass over the fact that it was on many occasions a Scottish Member who occupied the position of teller in those Divisions. I also wish to point out that it was the hon. Member for Fife who moved one of the most important Amendments. Taking these 12 Divisions, I find that in the various minorities there were 1,791 Members voted. Of these 1,791 Members who were in the minorities on these occasions, no less than 760, or between a third and a half of the whole number, were composed of those Irish and Scotch Members who think it is right that every part of the country should manage its own affairs. I admit there was a small number of Irish and Scotch Members in the majorities, but then I am dealing with the question of inconsistency, and I venture to think we shall find that the Members who voted in the majorities will, every one of them, go into the Lobby against the proposal of the hon. Member for Leith. I quite admit there may be some Party capital to be made out of a Division of this kind, but I cannot believe there is any serious intention of treating this as a fair and legitimate means of dealing with what is really an Imperial question. I believe myself it is our right, and it is our duty, to frame the great measures for every part of this United Empire—to frame them with a desire not merely for the benefit of the Empire, but for the benefit also of its component parts. I have little doubt that on mere questions of machinery as to which Scottish Members have a right to be heard, their views and opinions will be given that legitimate weight as every English Member wishes to give them, but if they trench upon those larger principles which are not the birthright of Scotland alone, but are the birthright of the whole Empire, we and every one of us will claim our right, and take our right, to discuss them. It is only within the last few years that the word "separation" has ever been heard in Scotland, but I hope and believe that the tide which has unfortunately risen will soon ebb, never to flow again, and that Scotchmen will soon be proud of being a part of the United Kingdom—no mean part of it, but still, only a part.

MR. A. ELLIOT (Roxburgh): I should like to say a few words on this proposal, as a Scotchman and as a Scottish Member. My hon. Friend who seconded the Motion says that the desire for Home Rule has been gaining ground in Scotland of late. If that is so in Scotland, the reverse is the case within these walls, for it was not many weeks ago that troops of Scottish Members—not, I am happy to say, the majority of the Representatives of the Scottish nation—mustered in the Lobby in support of a much more extreme proposal than that we are now considering. It was proposed to set up a Parliament to legislate exclusively for Scotland. Time went on, and the hon. Member for Leith laid his proposal before the House proposing to refer Scottish Bills to an exclusive Committee framed on the principle of the Scottish nationality. He no doubt took counsel with right hon. Friends of his—with the right hon. Gentlemen who, when the more extreme proposal was made, went out of the House rather than record a vote against it. Having consulted with the right hon. Gentleman, the hon. Member for Leith puts down on the Paper a very different Motion, which cuts out the principle on which the original proposal was made. The proposal to set up a Scottish Committee to deal with Scottish Bills has disappeared, and now the House has to consider solely the proposal to constitute a Committee of which only two-thirds shall be Scottish Members. This Bill is proposed on the responsibility of the Government, and is it to be seriously contended that it shall cease to be controlled by the Government the moment it passes the Second Reading stage? You cannot have measures proposed by the Government and accepted in principle by the majority of the House, and then given over to be settled in detail by a majority bitterly opposed to the Government. Hon. Gentlemen who support the proposal of the hon. Member for Leith must deal with that point.

The Scottish Members ought to be a little more careful of the equality that should exist between themselves and the English Members, and between the Scottish and English people. If you are to proceed on the lines of setting up a separate Parliament, or a Committee that is to be exclusively Scotch, then, as a necessary result, you will be bound to face this position—that the English Members will insist upon the same thing, and the Scottish Members will be excluded from the discussion of English Local Government, of the regulation of English ecclesiastical affairs, and of many other matters of great importance not only to England, but to Scottish people as well. I heard cheers from below the Gangway when I talked about the English Members claiming the exclusive right to manage English affairs; but I have always held that England cannot be regarded as a mere limited district of the United Kingdom. England is a country of so much importance, and the questions that arise in connection with England are of such vast moment to the rest of the United Kingdom, that it would be a mockery to say that Scotland can have no concern in English questions. Just look for a moment at the question of Local Government. We had brought forward during the past Session a measure for the Local Government of England. I never heard any suggestion that it would be right and proper to leave the English Bill to be discussed exclusively by the English Members. Why, among the right hon. Gentlemen who took part in the discussion of that measuse, were the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), who is a Scottish Member; the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir G. Trevelyan), who is also a Scottish Member; the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), another Scottish Member; and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers)—all of them representatives of Scottish constituencies. Is it to be seriously put forward—can it be put forward seriously—that it would have been right and wise as a practical matter to get rid, in the discussions in Committee on the English Local Government Bill, of the right hon. Gentlemen whose names I have just mentioned? Surely such a proposition cannot be seriously advanced. We have heard a great deal about the over-ruling of Scottish opinion; but are we so to confine the discussion of all important local questions which affect ourselves, that Members of one nation, neither the English, Irish, Scotch, nor Welsh Members are to take any part in questions which are the immediate concern of either of the other geological divisions of the United Kingdom? If we are to go for a distinctive principle, let us go for it thoroughly. If we are for a Scottish Parliament, let us go for a Scottish Parliament, with a Scottish Executive; and in that case we must also accept an English Parliament with an English Executive, an Irish Parliament with an Irish Executive, and a Welsh Parliament with a Welsh Executive. I think I have gone far enough with reference to the proposals of the Government. As I understand them, they are proposals not made solely in relation to Scotch Bills, but with regard to matters that may be extended to English Bills. The plan of the Government appears to me to be to separate principle and detail, by putting great principles into one measure and machinery and details into another. It certainly seem to me to be a considerable advance in the direction of effective reform in the procedure of the House when it is proposed to refer matters of detail and machinery to something in the nature of a Select Committee, while retaining great principles for the consideration of the whole House. Whether the Committee now proposed would be the right Committee to which this particular measure should be referred, or whether it ought not to be discussed in Committee of the whole House, is another matter. I am bound to say that in my opinion the second Bill is one consisting mainly of detail, as to which I do not see why the minutiæ should not be discussed by the Scottish Members, though I should be very willing to let some one else take my place on the Law Committee to which it is to be referred. I undoubtedly think that the proposal of the Government marks a distinct step in the direction of giving increased power and efficiency to the action of

this House. I do not think I need trouble the House any further on this matter. I hope that when we get into Committee we shall deal with the matter in a business-like spirit, with the view of making the measure a thoroughly practical one. It has hitherto been well discussed by both sides of the House, and I trust that we shall be able in Committee to carry it through in such a manner as to make it a starting point for Scotland in the direction of a good and effective system of Local Government.

*Mr. J. SHIRESS WILL (Montrose): Every hon. Gentleman in this House knows that in the ordinary course a Bill read a second time is referred to a Committee of the whole House, the reason being obvious. But contrary to this practice we have the fact that in regard to these Scotch Bills the Government intend to force upon this House a different course. We are told that the first Bill is to be referred to a Committee of the whole House, while the second Bill, which is said to be one of detail, is to be referred to the Law Committee. But I say that in the second Bill there are matters of principle from the discussion of which the Scotch Members would, by such a course, be largely shut out, at any rate it would be impossible to have a full representation of Scotch opinion on the matter. Now, supposing it is proposed in the second Bill, which is to be referred to the Law Committee——

Mr. SPEAKER: I would point out to the hon. and learned Member that the second Bill is not now before the House, and that he is not therefore in order in discussing that measure.

*Mr. J. SHIRESS WILL: Then, Sir, I will confine myself to the first Bill. My hon. Friend (Mr. A. Elliot) has found fault with the alteration of the Motion put upon the Paper by the hon. Member for Leith (Mr. Munro Ferguson), and has said that it is no longer sought to have a full discussion by the Scottish Members of what is essentially a Scottish Bill. But nothing of the sort is intended by this proposal. When legislation of this kind was brought forward last Session, and we had the whole matter threshed out in this House, we found how impossible it was to get a reference to Scotch Members exclusively; and, therefore, in regard to this Bill we have asked that there should be joined with the Scottish Representatives thirty other Members to be nominated by the Committee of Selection. We did this for a very good reason, because it was thought that all Members having a special knowledge of Scotland should have the opportunity of giving us the benefit of their experience in the discussion of the measure. There are many hon. Members who come within this category, besides which, there are many who have had large experience of Local Government in England whose voices, we thought, would also be useful in our discussions. Therefore, instead of the modification my hon. Friend has made in his proposal being open to objection, it must be acknowledged that he has only endeavoured to meet the objections which might be raised on the other side of the House. My hon. Friend opposite (Mr. G. Hardy has said if you subtract local matters from Imperial Government something will remain which must necessarily be Imperial, and in the discussion of which all Members of the House are entitled to assist. But my hon. Friend applying his theory found in this Bill the Alderman, and thought that the Aldermanic office must be a matter of Imperial concern. Hemight have known that in Scotland, and for very good reasons, we do not desire to have anything of the sort. That is exactly the reason why we desire to have a Bill which will have in it something consonant with the wishes and desires of the Scottish people. We do not desire to have the four bare walls that have been displayed to us and made the most of. We wish to see the space within those four walls furnished with some of the things we desire. What will be the result if this Motion is not acceded to? That English Members, without taking part in the discussions, will, in a division,

outvote Scotch Members, all the while believing that they are doing their duty.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. MOIR T. STORMONTH DARLING, Edinburgh and Aberdeen Universities): Mr. Speaker, I find that Scotch members who are most anxious for proposals of this kind, and most jealous of the interference of English Members in Scotch affairs, are members who, like the hon. and learned gentleman who has just sat down, have been driven by a cruel fate to spend their lives at the English Bar. My hon. friend the member for Leith Burghs, however, is not open to that aspersion. The hon. gentleman delivered his speech with becoming gravity, but with a twinkle in his eye, and it became apparent that he had been compelled by some mysterious force at the back or in front of him to mutilate his motion, and he took his revenge by delivering his speech against the motion as it stands on the Paper. Now, if English Members are not to intervene between Scotch measures and Scotch affairs, I seriously ask Scotch Members why they intervene, as they do, between English measures and English affairs. During the short time I have had the honour of a seat in this House I have not found my hon. friend opposite limiting his mind to Scotland, though that may be said of a great many hon. Members sitting on this side of the House. If hon. Members opposite really insist on the principle that Scotch affairs are to be reserved as a subject for Scotch Members alone, they ought to begin by setting a good example and leaving English affairs to English Members. The two rival proposals before the House, are that of my hon. friend for a hybrid Committee, consisting of all the Scotch Members, and of 30 English Members—why 30 he has not explained—and that of the Government, which is simple and straightforward, to remit the Bill to a Committee of the whole House. If the Government had taken any other course they would, I venture to say, have been instantly met with the inquiry, "Why do you propose to treat this important Bill differently from the English Local Government Bill? Why treat the former with less respect than the latter?" When you come to examine the alternative of my hon. Friend it comes in plain English to this: he says in effect—"If you send the Bill to a Committee of the whole House I am afraid there will be obstruction, and if you do not like obstruction then there is the alternative proposed to take the Bill off your hands."

MR. M. FERGUSON: I said nothing whatever about obstruction in my speech. I said that, judging from the time Scotch Members had found it necessary to occupy—I believe without any idea of obstruction—on the Second Reading, if the discussions bore any proportion in Committee to those on the Second Reading, they would take up a vast amount of the time of the House.

MR. DARLING: The right hon. Member has merely put with parentheses that which I put in a shorter phrase. But does it not come to this—"If you do not want to have the time of the House, I will not say 'wasted,' but 'consumed'—then hand us over the Bill to do what we like with." My hon. Friend knows perfectly well that of the 72 Scotch Members there are 46 on the Opposition side and 26 on the Ministerial side, and, adding the 30 which presumably are to be drawn equally from both sides, the result is that the hon. Member's side would have 61 to the Government's 41. That is sufficient to show that the proposal could hardly be treated seriously. Has it been ever heard of in Parliamentary history that an important Bill named in the Queen's Speech should be handed over by a Government to their political opponents? It is a proposal to which the Government cannot accede. We have stated our utmost desire to accept suggestions from all parts of the House, and if it be urged that time would be saved by the operation, that argument is sufficiently met by the further argument of the hon. Gentleman that the whole proceedings of the Committee would be open for review by the House

when the Bill came up on Report. Thus the whole work would probably have to be done over again. Therefore, I say this cannot be a serious proposal, and I cannot better express the view which the Government takes of it than by quoting the observation of one hon. Member of this House, who is treated with great deference in all parts of it, namely, the hon. Member for Bedford, on a Motion for the appointment of a Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Scotland only :—

"If the proposal was that this Committee should consist of Scotch Members exclusively, or that on the Committee the Scotch Members should so preponderate as to overbear all other opinions, it was a bad and a dangerous proposal, because it would only tend to accentuate the differences that might possibly exist between the two countries."

MR. WHITBREAD (Bedford): I had no intention of taking any part in this debate, but as the hon. and learned Gentleman has been good enough to quote from some observations I made last year, I may perhaps be allowed to give some explanation. On that occasion I referred to what had occurred in this House within the last one or two years, and pointed out that it was not unlikely that some such proposal as this would be made. We last year asked the Government to refer Scotch measures to a Grand Committee formed in the ordinary way, and I warmly urged the Government to accede to that proposal, but it did not find favour with them; although I told them that if they refused it, it was likely larger demands would be made hereafter. The hon. and learned Gentleman has admitted that the Government do not represent Scotland. Since last year he has turned his attention to the subject, and found that the Government do not represent Scotland. Upon Scotch business how, then, is the mind of the Government to be informed? It will not be informed by their own intelligence—not that I consider them unintelligent—and it will not be informed by their friends, because, as a matter of fact, those who sit behind them do not represent Scotland. How, then, is the Government to be better informed of the wishes of Scotland than by having a Committee largely composed of Scotch Members? I would not vote for a Committee composed altogether of Scotch Members; there should be a large number of English Members upon it in order that the mind of England should be advised of the wishes of Scotland, and that the Committee should learn what the objections of England may be to any particular proposals. If the Government will not accept this Motion, they will give a fresh spur to the demand for a purely Scotch Committee.

MR. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I should be sorry indeed to interpose between the House and my hon. Friend who has just sat down, and who speaks with so much authority on this class of question, to which he has given much thought and time with such excellent effect in the public interest. But having heard the case of the Government, I wish to say a few words. This Motion is not conceived in a spirit of extreme concession to the idea of Scotch nationality; but at the same time, I have no doubt that it is conceived—and it is certainly supported by myself—with the firm conviction that it would be extremely inconvenient to the Government and the House entirely to overlook and refuse recognition to the wishes of the Scotch Members. The consequence, I venture to say from what I know of Scotland, will be extremely inconvenient, especially to the Government and their supporters. The arguments for the Motion are not devoid of weight. In the first place, we want to have this Bill referred to the fittest Committee that we can get, and our opinion is that a Committee formed of the whole body of Scotch Members, together with a liberal addition of Members from other portions of the United Kingdom, would be a fitter Committee for the purpose of considering and despatching this Bill than a Committee formed, as far as listening

to and sharing in the Debates are concerned, of sixty or seventy Members, but which, when a Division is about to be taken, is reinforced by 200 or 300 gentlemen, three-fourths of whom have heard nothing of the discussion. We hold that these Bills should be referred to one and the same Committee, and when I ask myself why the Bills have been separated, I can find no good reason in the nature of the case. They are separated for a reason altogether artificial in order that they may be referred to different Committees. But that is a thing to be avoided and deprecated, because a contradictory method of dealing with them might be the result, the more competent tribunal being confined to the less important Bill and the less competent tribunal to the more important Bill. There is great force in the argument of my hon. Friend the Member for Leith that the mode of action proposed by him would save the time of the House. The Solicitor General for Scotland says that that means if they do not take this mode there will be obstruction. According to the hon. and learned Gentleman, therefore, when my hon. Friend submits that time is likely to be wasted by a particular mode of proceeding that means a threat of obstruction. When it is shown that a Grand Committee would work with expedition, the hon. and learned Gentleman has the boldness to say that is a periphrasis for obstruction. The Grand Committees are founded to save the time of the House, and the Bills referred to them are the least likely to be obstructed. The speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman is adapted to the time when his friends were opposing the institution of Grand Committees. To say that on the proposed Committee the Government would be in a minority is to treat this Bill as a Party question; but it has not been so treated, and I hope it will not be. The consideration of Scotch nationality combined with the consideration of fitness in the tribunal is a matter of greater weight and moment than an argument drawn from a computation of numbers. It is rather hard upon Scotland to be punished for returning a majority of Liberal Members by having a Bill of this kind referred to the less competent Committee, when it is in the power of the House to refer it to a more competent Committee. The hon. and learned Gentleman says that this is not a serious proposal. Sir, in my opinion, it is a very serious proposal, and in time the hon. and learned Gentleman will learn how serious it is. I entreat the House to take a prudential view, and I warn it that the nationality of Scotland is not to be trifled with. The Scotch are a dangerous people, and that majority so dolefully recited as a fact will be greatly aggravated unless the Scotch people are treated with prudence and consideration. If it is a Party question the Government would be in a difficulty in the proposed Committee; but we have endeavoured not to treat this as a Party question. The jurisdiction of a Grand Committee is not a final one, and any grave error committed by the Committee could be rectified by the House. When it is said that Scotch Members should begin by abstaining from English affairs, it must be remembered that the much smaller number of Scotch Members as compared with English makes all the difference in the character and effect of their interference. This question of nationality in Scotland is in a critical condition; the mind of Scotland is in a state of considerable susceptibility, and the House will act wisely if it makes moderate concessions lest resistance should lead to the enlargement of future demands, and the House should have to display the reverse of courage by something like ignominious surrender.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): The right hon. Gentleman seldom touches the question of nationality without attempting to aggravate any difference that may possibly exist between the various component parts of the United Kingdom. I do not think that the speech which has been delivered to us is an exception from that general rule. He has told us that the mind of Scotland was uninformed.

MR. GLADSTONE: Unformed.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Unformed on this question. How does he attempt to form it? Does he attempt to bind closer the tie which unites England and Scotland? I say he attempts to loosen

it. The hon. Member for Bedford, in a speech which I listened to with amazement, told us that the opinion of last Session was one which he has abandoned; that he has taken a new view of the claims of Scotland; and that if we do not give way to the claims which Scotland he says is making (and which I believe Scotland is not making) there will be further claims next year. I have no doubt the hon. Member would give in to those claims next year as he has given it to the claims of this year; and would be prepared to carry on the process *ad infinitum* until Scotland was a separate kingdom. [An ironical cheer from Mr. GLADSTONE.] The right hon. Gentleman has told us that in these Grand Committees is the solution of this question of nationality.

MR. GLADSTONE: No.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, the palliation of the difficulties between the separate parts of the kingdom. But the right hon. Gentleman was the creator of these Committees; he was their inventor, their author. Is there in the constitution of these Committees the slightest arrangement corresponding to that which we are now asked to accept? The Grand Committees were framed to represent the balance of Parties in the House. This was their essence, and if we destroy that essence we should make the greatest revolution in Parliamentary procedure that has been made in the last century. Every one knows that the essence of our legislative procedure in this House is that the Government which introduces Bills should be responsible for their conduct through the House, and in order to carry that out the Government need at its back that majority which makes it the Government. It is now proposed for the first time, and in absolute contradiction of the principles laid down by the right hon. Gentleman himself——

MR. GLADSTONE: No. I wish the right hon. Gentleman would acquaint himself with the declarations made by me in connection with these Grand Committees—namely, that they were a mere tentative experiment—[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"]—that is one way of conducting Parliamentary Debate which I do not wish to encourage—and that they were not in the form that they were finally capable of taking.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am speaking, and speaking accurately, of the plan as carried into effect by the right hon. Gentleman. He never told us what the final development would be. We were never allowed to see the grown man; we are only shown the embryo. This is a revolution so great that I think the House would be insane, absolutely insane, if it accepted it without the most serious discussion. I think I can bring that truth home by an illustration even in the three minutes still left to me. The present Government is in a majority in this House, but it is not in a majority of the Scotch Members. Referring the Bill to a Committee of Scotch Members would therefore be entrusting one of its stages to a body which represented neither the Government nor the House. Now the right hon. Gentleman has been, and hopes to be again, in a majority in this House, but he has not been for 20 years in a majority of English Members. No, not since '68, and I do not believe there is the slightest chance of his ever being again in a majority. Is he prepared to look forward to a period when he, as leader of this House and the person responsible for legislation in that House will have to carry out the principle he is now laying down? Is he prepared to refer important English Bills to a Grand Committee in which the balance of parties in the Imperial Parliament will not be represented, but in which the balance of feeling in England would be represented? Is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to subject his English legislation to a Conservative majority of English Members and throw overboard his Scotch and Irish followers? If that is the case the right hon. Gentleman will find that the wheels of legislation will drag even more heavily than in the past, and that he will not be able to carry through the House the Bills he introduced in anything like the shape in which he introduced them.

The House divided :—Ayes 239 ; Noes 177.—(Div. List No. 132.)

Main Question put.

Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House for Monday 17th June.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS BILL.

[No. 188.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. W. A. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): Before this Bill is read a second time, I wish to ask the attention of the House to one point. We were told earlier in the evening that it is the intention of the Government to take the control of this Bill after the Second Reading entirely away from this House and to place it before a Committee composed of a number of English lawyers, and including very few Scotch members. If the Government intend to persist in that purpose, then it will be necessary to object to the Second Reading of the Bill, because it is obvious that the only opportunity which the Scotch Members will have of expressing their opinion, and instructing the members of the Committee, will be on the Second Reading of the Bill. I hope the Government will intimate its intention of abandoning that idea of referring this Bill, which is really an essential part of the first Bill, and will allow the two to be dealt with by the same Committee.

*MR. W. H. SMITH : The House will hardly expect me to give an absolute answer to the question addressed to me by the hon. Gentleman. I have indicated the course which the Government, in the interest of the House itself, and of the measure which I presume the Scotch Members are desirous of passing, intend to take. There is no intention to move to-night that the Bill be referred to a Standing Committee. The Bill will stand over for consideration at the same time as Bill No. 1, and it will be perfectly open to hon. Members to object to the course which the Government propose to take, and we will listen to their arguments. I venture to say, however, that it would be most undesirable for us to propose to consider this question until the Motion is made—and it will not be made to-night—to refer it to the Standing Committee or any other Committee. I trust that the understanding which was arrived at, that the Bill should be read with Bill No. 1, will be adhered to, leaving further proceedings in regard to it for future consideration by the House.

MR. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): I think it is due to the right hon. Gentleman opposite to say that, so far as any action of mine is binding, and so far as I have a right in any way to represent the views of the Scotch Members, I did undertake that the Second Reading of this Bill should be taken to-night, and the reference to Committee should also be dealt with, leaving the question of the Committee as regards the Second Bill to be discussed and debated at length on a future occasion. I hope hon. Members will agree to this course, which I believe is a proper one, and one that it would be desirable that the House should adopt.

MR. HUNTER : I object, Sir.

*MR. W. H. SMITH : I hope that the hon. Member will not persist in his opposition. I venture to appeal to the hon. Member in the interests of the Party with which he is connected. It is impossible that business should be conducted in this House, unless on a fair and reasonable understanding that, after ample debate at certain stages, Bills shall be accepted and future discussions shall be arranged amicably.

MR. HUNTER : It will be irregular for me to intrude on the House a second time, but I will put one question which I should like answered. Are we to understand that the Government will not use their majority to force this Bill to a Standing Committee, in the way in which they used their majority to-night to prevent us continuing the Debate.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I object.

MR. HUNTER: And so do I.

Second Reading deferred till to-morrow at two of the o'clock.

COMMISSIONERS FOR OATHS BILL [LORDS]. (No. 208.)

Read the third time and passed with Amendment.

OCCUPIERS' DISQUALIFICATION REMOVAL BILL. (No. 52.)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [15th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I trust that my hon. Friend who is in charge of this Bill, which in my opinion, is a useful measure so far as it goes, will do something to widen its scope. I object to it in its present narrow sense; and I should like to see it so extended that if a man occupies a house for twelve months before his case comes before the Revising Barrister, he shall be entitled to his vote. Surely the hon. Member can have no objection to that proposal.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea): My Bill applies to householders who are disqualified by reason of absence from home doing service for the Crown.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If a man has been a ratepayer in a city, and occupied a house for twelve months, why, in the name of goodness, should that man be deprived of his vote, especially when his absence is compulsory? The rates have to be paid during his absence. I want the law on this point which runs in England to be applied to Ireland.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I have not had an opportunity of considering the question of the effect of this Bill on Ireland, and if the hon. Member will allow his objection to stand over, I will undertake to consult with the Solicitor General for Ireland, and see whether or not it can be made to extend to Ireland.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed for Monday, 17th June.

COUNTY COURT APPEALS (IRELAND) BILL. (No. 241.)

As Amended, further considered.

A Clause (Appeal in certain cases after time has expired) added.

Amendments made.

Bill to be read a third time, to-morrow at two of the clock.

DISPENSARY HOUSES (IRELAND) ACT (1879) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 120.)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [28th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Dr. Tanner.*)

Question "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question," put, and agreed to.

Main Question put.

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

COLONIZATION COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That Mr. Sydney Buxton be discharged from the Select Committee on Colonization.

Ordered, That Mr. William M'Arthur be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. Arnold Morley.*)

MOTION.

—o—

RAILWAY COMPANIES (PASSENGER TICKETS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Causton, Bill to compel Railway Companies to print on Tickets issued to passengers the fare charged, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Causton, Mr. Howell, Sir John Lubbock, and Mr. Winterbotham.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 251.]

House adjourned at Twenty Minutes to One o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 14.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [JUNE 18.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 31*st May*, 1889.

The Duke of Sutherland took the oath.

NAVAL DEFENCE BILL (No. 80.)

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

COMMISSIONERS FOR OATHS BILL (No. 6.)

Returned from the Commons agreed to.

PASSENGERS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

A Bill to amend the Passengers Act, 1855, and the Passengers Act Amendment Act, 1863—Was presented by the Lord Knutsford; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 100.)

ADOPTION OF CHILDREN BILL.

A Bill to regulate the adoption of children and the guardianship of them by incorporated institutes.—Was presented by the Lord Chaworth (*E. Meath*); read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 101.)

SMOKE NUISANCE ABATEMENT (METROPOLIS) BILL. (No. 13.)

Reported from the Standing Committee for General Bills, with Amendment: The Report thereof received; and Bill re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

HARES PRESERVATION BILL. (No. 72.)

Reported from the Standing Committee for General Bills, with amendments: The Report thereof received; and Bill re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

LAND TRANSFER BILL. No. (8.)

House in Committee (according to order): Amendments made by the Select Committee agreed to; the Report thereof to be received on Monday next.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS.

EARL GRANVILLE: Would it be convenient for the noble Marquess to state the date on which he proposes that the House should adjourn for the Whitsuntide recess?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): The noble Earl is aware that the other House adjourns on Thursday next. I think it will be convenient for your Lordships to adjourn on the same day and re-assemble on Thursday fortnight.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS BILL (No. 62.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*EARL BROWNLOW: My Lords, the Bill, which is now before the House, and to which I beg to ask your Lordships to give a Second Reading is, as your Lordships are all aware, founded upon the Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the general condition of reformatory and industrial schools. The Bill is essentially a Bill of consolidation, dealing with an enormous mass of details. No doubt these details can be better discussed on the Committee stage, but it is my duty to point out to the House certain changes of the law which the Bill proposes. The Bill is divided into

three parts. I will dispose of the third part immediately by merely saying that it is a list of Acts which are amended by the Bill. The first part deals with certified industrial schools, and gives power to the County Councils or the Councils of county boroughs to institute and maintain those institutions wherever they deem them necessary. Contributory powers are also given to the same bodies. The second part of the Bill deals with truant schools and day industrial schools. For these schools the Bill makes the School Board the contributory authority, and they are given the power to institute and maintain such schools. Power is also given for the detention of children in the public elementary schools during the day, in order to insure their attendance during the whole of the school hours. The total number of schools affected by the Bill is as follows:—By the first part—in England 108 and in Scotland 32, or 140 in all, of which 124 has been established by voluntary agency; by the second part—ten truant schools in England, and none in Scotland (all the truant schools being in England) and 15 day industrial schools in England and two in Scotland. The first matter of importance which I have to point out in the Bill is in Clause 10. Clause 10 enacts that where a child is found to be habitually begging or receiving alms, or under improper guardianship, or wandering without any home or settled place of abode, or frequenting the company of any reputed thief or thieves, or of any common or reputed prostitute or prostitutes, or lodging or residing in a house frequented by any prostitute or prostitutes for the purpose of prostitution, or where a child not having been previously convicted of felony is charged before a Court of Summary Jurisdiction with an offence punishable by imprisonment, or a less punishment, if the Court is satisfied of either of these circumstances, and that the child is less than 14 years of age, it may order the child to be sent to a certified industrial school, or, if the child is less than 10 years of age and is not charged with felony, may order that he be placed in charge of a Boarding-out Committee as provided by the Act. Now, this power of handing over the child to a Boarding-out Committee is, for us, a new departure. I have every reason to believe that in this matter England has something to learn from her Colonies. The experiment of boarding-out has been tried to a very great extent in Australia, and with such signal success that the system of boarding-out is rapidly taking the place of industrial schools. I must say that I do not think for a moment that this will be the case in England. It appears to me that there is quite sufficient room both for industrial schools to do the excellent work they are doing, and for the Boarding-out Committees to do their excellent work. But I would point out to the House what children these are who are to be sent to Boarding-out Committees. They are only little children, under 10 years of age, many of them children who have been brought up under no guardianship at all, or—what is worse—under bad guardianship; children of tender age, who require all the comfort and supervision which can only be got in a home. It is for such children as these that this clause is introduced, and I believe that if the Bill is passed into law the system will meet here with the success which it has met with in our Colonies. The next point of importance is this: Clause 12 provides that where a child is charged before a Court of Summary Jurisdiction with an offence for which he may under the Act be detained in a certified industrial school, the Court may instead order the child, if a male, to be whipped; adjourn the case on the parent undertaking to punish the child; fine the parent any sum not exceeding £1; order the parent to give compensation not exceeding £5 for injuries inflicted; or order the parent to give security for the child's good behaviour. The manner in which the whipping is to be administered and the number of strokes to be ordered are carefully dealt with in another part of the Bill. I may say that all these provisions are strictly in accordance with the recommendations of the Royal Commission. In Clause 19 there is a provision of some importance. It provides that where a child is ordered to be detained in a certified industrial school, other than a truant school, the order shall be for his detention therein until he attains the age of eighteen years; but it is provided that when the child has attained the age of sixteen years he shall be discharged from the

school either absolutely or conditionally. Where a child has been conditionally discharged from a certified industrial school and it is found that he is running into evil courses, or likely to lapse into crime, it is provided that the Secretary of State may revoke the order of discharge and order the child to return to the school, and there remain until he attains the age of eighteen years, or for any less period specified in the order, and if the child disobeys the order, he may be dealt with as if he had escaped from the school. The question of inspection has been most carefully considered. It was proposed at one time that there should be a dual inspection—partly under the Home Office and partly under the Education Department. That proposal raised such vast objections on the part of managers of industrial schools that it was abandoned altogether. On this point I can only repeat what I stated in introducing to your Lordships the companion measure—the Reformatories Bill—namely, that if in the course of the discussion of the Bill any suggestion can be made by which the inspection of the Home Office should not be interfered with or weakened in any way, and at the same time some other inspection should be introduced which is not disagreeable to the managers of industrial schools, the Government will be happy to give that proposal every consideration. Another important provision which I may mention in passing is, that the parents are to be primarily responsible for the cost of maintenance of their children in industrial schools. With regard to the principle of the Bill, this is, as I have said, entirely one of consolidation. There will be a number of questions of more or less important details, such as the age of the children, the exact sum to be contributed by the different contributory authorities, and so forth, which will crop up in Committee, and will, no doubt, have the best consideration of your Lordships at that stage, but at the present time I do not know that there is anything further that I need draw attention to that can be properly discussed on the Second Reading. I am perfectly aware that the question which I have introduced is a dry one. I can only say that I have done my best in as few words as possible to lay before the House the chief provisions of the Bill, and I have to thank your Lordships for the patience with which you have listened to me.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl Brownlow.*)

LORD NORTON: My Lords, although the notice which I have put upon the Paper apparently challenges the principle of this Bill, I quite admit that the subject is of the greatest possible interest to everybody; and, if there is a fault in the principle of the Bill, now is the time, when these Acts are being consolidated, for your Lordships to consider it. What I ask your Lordships to do is to defer the Second Reading until the Bill has been so far corrected that it does not mix up in one common treatment merely destitute and criminal children. The Bill proposes to consolidate and amend the Industrial School Acts, *pari passu* with another Bill for reformatory schools. It proposes to maintain industrial schools for a distinct purpose and use, while checking their abuse. The abuse is, as everybody agrees who has looked into the subject, that many children are sent to these schools who ought not to be sent. I will refer to only one clause of the Report of the Royal Commission of which I had the honour to be a member, and which was presided over most ably for two or three years by the noble Lord opposite, Lord Aberdare. The Report says—

> "There is ample testimony to the fact that the power of committing children to industrial schools has been largely abused, often from benevolent motives, sometimes because of the facilities afforded by the law to parents to get rid of the burden of their children's support and education by throwing it upon the industrial school system."

That is a very serious thing. After spending a whole year in London taking evidence, the Commissioners visited industrial schools in all parts of the kingdom. We found that throughout all Scotland the pauper schools had been emptied into the industrial school, so that neither in Edinburgh, or Glasgow, or Aberdeen, were there any pauper schools. Our extremely clever fellow countrymen, by emptying them into the industrial schools, got the charge thrown on the Treasury instead of on the local rates. Then in Ireland, where, if any advantage can be taken of an Act it is sure to be taken, we found, on looking round the industrial schools of Dublin,

a very considerable proportion of the children did not come at all under the description of the Act. We sent to the Chief Magistrate of Dublin and pointed out that many of the children were not of the class described in the Act, and he said that they ought to be, but "he had never seen the Act." Now, if an Act is capable of such wholesale abuse, I think it is about time for us to look into it and correct it. The correction proposed by this Bill is to restrict the admission of children into schools of this kind, and the mode in which it proposes to do that is by drawing a line between what are called police cases and purely educational cases. My Amendment goes further, and suggests that all police cases should be removed from industrial schools altogether, and placed in some modified form of reformatories, which would, perhaps, more properly be done under the Reformatories Bill. I can give your Lordships, in a very few words, a sketch of the legislation upon this matter. The first Act was a Scotch Act only—the Scotch Industrial Schools Act of 1854—which provided these schools distinctly for "vagrant children" not convicted of any offence, who were to be put into schools established by Parochial Boards or by voluntary associations. The Act which followed in 1861 made a very material addition. It introduced children, not vagrant or destitute, but who had been charged with an offence before a Magistrate, although not convicted. The English Industrial Schools Act followed on exactly the same lines as the Scotch Act; and in 1866 came the Consolidating Act which is now in force. Under it the industrial schools are of a sort of hybrid description, partly for children who have been charged with offences but not convicted, and partly for destitute and neglected outcast children. In fact, to-day the industrial school is something between a mild reformatory and a refuge. Then the Elementary Education Act of 1870 introduced a totally new class of children into these schools. That Act established School Boards, and enabled them to maintain and even to set up industrial schools to which they could send children for non-attendance in the elementary schools. The Education Act of 1876 carried this still further, largely mutiplying the number of children sent, and establishing day industrial schools, extending practically the same system in another direction. That being the state of the law, this Bill proposes to check this large influx of children into these schools by severing the School Boards altogether from industrial schools, and placing all non-attendance cases in separate establishments called truant schools. This, then, is the principle of the Bill to which we are now asked to give a Second Reading—to separate purely educational cases from police cases. But, my Lords, the Bill does not do what it pretends to do. It continues to mix up the two classes. The whole point of my Amendment is to do away with the common treatment of children charged with offences and merely destitute children. If I understand the noble Earl rightly he really wishes the industrial school to be a sort of mild reformatory in which there shall be children charged with offences and sent by Magistrates, and also children who are simply destitute and who have been described as "probable criminals." I say that that phrase is altogether unknown to our English Law. There are criminals, and there are those who, however vicious, however likely to become criminals, are not criminals; but there is no state of "probable criminality" under our law. I might venture to say that there are some Members of this House who, if they had been brought up in the same way as these children, would have been not probable, but actual criminals. Of this I am certain—that our gaols would very soon be overflowing if to the criminals in them we added the "probable criminals" throughout the whole country. Now, to show the folly and wickedness of mixing up the criminal with the non-criminal cases, let me direct your Lordships' attention to one or two of the provisions of this Bill. Power is to be given to any Court of Summary Jurisdiction to order a male child to be whipped. Well, your Lordships know my opinion about flogging generally, but whoever heard of such a monstrous proceeding as whipping destitute children? The State positively in this Bill comes forward *in loco parentis* to undertake the guardianship of children left wholly without guardians, and it offers them education birch in hand, like the old caricatures

of the schoolmaster abroad. Besides, consider the stigma that is cast upon these children whom you take up from the streets. Why should they be stigmatized as quasi-criminals or probable criminals, and sent to the same establishment and submitted to the same control and discipline as those actually charged with offences? It is, I say, most cruel and harsh, and it has, moreover, this mischief about it, that it actually impedes their getting the employment which their training in these schools is intended to fit them for. The proposition which I submit to your Lordships, and very earnestly press upon you to endorse, is that there should be absolutely distinct treatment of children who are criminal and those who are merely destitute and outcast. In support of that view, I can quote the Report of the Royal Commission, and the opinion of one who is recognized by all who take any interest in these institutions to speak with authority. The Report of the Commission suggests that Magistrates shall be authorized to hand over to the Guardians those children who really belong to the pauper class instead of sending them to reformatories. The principal memorandum upon which that recommendation is based quotes Mr. Sydney Turner as giving exactly that advice. There I have two very high authorities for the proposition which I ask your Lordships to affirm. I may observe that my proposition, though very materially correcting the principle of the Bill, would involve only very slight verbal alterations in the Bill. The principal alteration would be to substitute the Local Government Board for the Secretary of State. Already, I notice, my noble Friend has done away with the phraseology of the Reformatory Acts. Instead of the phrase "committing children to school," we have "sending them to school"; "detention," which strikes one as a prison phrase, is omitted. But, above all, the most material Amendment which the Bill makes in the law is that on which my noble Friend very justly laid stress—namely, the power given to Magistrates to hand these children over to Boarding-out Committees. I thank the noble Lord for having introduced that most valuable Amendment. And, no doubt, the Act works itself out in the direction of Local Government rather than in the direction of police But I wish to see all the provisions affecting children charged with offences taken out of this Bill and put into the Reformatories Bill. That is, so far as mere phraseology goes, a very slight alteration, which can easily be effected in Committee. The proposition for which I am arguing is really no new one; it really embodies the recommendation of the Royal Commission that there should be senior and junior reformatories—one for children who had been convicted more than once, and also for adults, and the other for that class of children which is in the Bill as it now stands so jumbled up with merely destitute children. Let me say that there will be no new establishment required, for fortunately these institutions have been so successful that at this moment there are a great number of reformatories which are not full, and it has actually been proposed that some of them should be done away with. Under the Bill as I propose it should be altered, the Magistrates could commit destitute children picked up in the streets to schools where they could be fitted for service or emigration, or could send them to the Boarding-out Committees. I have heard it objected to my proposal that it would throw extra charges on the rates. I propose that the rates should be charged as they are now mainly on the Treasury, for this reason: These children are not ordinary paupers; they are not connected with thieves; they are waifs and strays thrown upon the charge of the State, and in fairness they should be educated at the expense of the National Treasury. The incidence of cost, then, would be the same, the private management would be the same, the inspection would be the same, and a very great advantage would be gained by securing a better class of education for these children, and there would be relief of the present confusion and multiplication of these institutions. My Lords, I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment moved,

"To leave out all the words after 'that' and insert 'this House is unwilling to consent to the Second Reading of this Bill unless so far corrected in principle that schools to be provided by it for homeless children thrown on the

streets be classed among schools for the poor under the Local Government Board, and not among schools under the Home Office for children convicted of crime, though in other respects to be specially provided and maintained as proposed in the Bill.'"—(*The Lord Norton.*)

*LORD LEIGH: My Lords, I do not wish to follow my noble Relative into all the arguments that he has advanced. I think the House generally will congratulate the noble Earl on the very valuable Bill which he has introduced to the House, especially that portion of it which alludes to the power to send children under ten to Boarding-out Committees. I would like, however, to point out to your Lordships two clauses in this Bill, which I must say I hope will be amended in Committee. The first I wish to allude to is a provision in Clause 12, Sub-section (B), which empowers the Court "to adjourn the case on the parent undertaking to punish the child to the satisfaction of the Court." Now, we know who are generally the parents or guardians of these children. In nineteen cases out of twenty they are drunken and reckless, and it would be most undesirable to place in the hands of such people the power to punish their children. Moreover, who is to be the judge of the punishment? I should be very sorry to see this provision retained in the Bill. The other clause which I object to very much, and which I hope will be amended, is Clause 23, which provides that if a child above twelve years of age refuses or wilfully neglects to conform to the rules of the school he shall be liable to be imprisoned with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding three months. Is there one of your Lordships who remembers his own career at school who would not hesitate very much indeed to say that a boy should be imprisoned for "not conforming to the rules of the school?" I call it very harsh, indeed, to give that power to Magistrates, and I trust that clause may also be amended. I have myself given notice to leave out all the words which refer to imprisonment, merely leaving power to the Court before whom the child is brought to order him to be whipped or to send him to a certified reformatory school. I have taken very great interest, indeed, during the last thirty or thirty-five years both in Reformatory and Industrial Schools, and I congratulate the noble Earl (Earl Brownlow) very much on the Bill he has introduced, and I trust that it may pass into law, with Amendments, among others, of the particular passages to which I have called attention.

LORD ABERDARE: My Lords, I join, and I am sure your Lordships, generally, will join with my noble Friend who last spoke in congratulating the noble Earl on the very valuable measure he has introduced to us, but there are one or two observations I would like to make upon it. I think that this is a better Bill than that of last year, although, as regards certain portions, I would have preferred the Bill of last year to this. I cannot quite assent to the proposition of the noble Earl that the Bill is simply an embodiment of the recommendations of the Royal Commission. What did the Royal Commission say on this subject? There was a belief, which has turned out to be a well-grounded belief, that a vast number of children are admitted to the industrial schools who ought not to be there, children who have already embarked on a criminal career, instead of those who are simply found destitute and without guardians. One object of this Bill is to take additional precautions for securing that the schools shall only be used for the class for which they are intended. In Scotland I remember one great objection was that any single Magistrate sitting in his back parlour could commit a child to an industrial school. I presume that the definition of the word "Court" in this Bill would prevent such procedure as that. Another great improvement effected by the Bill is that it enables representatives of County Councils and other authorities, who have to contribute towards the maintenance of the schools, to be present when any child is to be committed to one of the schools, and to state the objections, if any there be, to the particular child being so committed. This will go a great way to prevent the use of these schools by children for whom they are not intended. There is one most important provision introduced in this Bill for the first time, and that is the system of boarding-out for children under the age of ten years. I think that is a most admirable provision, and one which will meet many of the harsh cases to which the noble Lord

(Lord Norton) referred in moving his Amendment. For my own part I attach the greatest value to this provision. In Scotland the boarding-out system has extended very widely, and with most beneficial effect. With reference to the powers given to School Boards to secure the committal of children to these schools, I think the provisions of very great advantage. There is no body of men who have a greater knowledge of the lower classes of this country than the School Board officers, and I believe that the children whose admission they will procure will be just the children for whom the schools were intended. It may be objected, and with some show of reason, that School Boards have to deal with education, whereas industrial schools are meant to be part of the police system of the country. That is true, but as a matter of practice there can be no doubt that the services of the School Board officers in finding out and sending into industrial schools not merely truants, but thoroughly vicious and vagrant children has been of inestimable value, and I should be very sorry, indeed, to see them altogether deprived of such powers. My noble Friend (Lord Norton) has said that the principle of this Bill is altogether bad, and that it involves the bringing up together in one establishment of children who belong to the criminal class and children who are merely destitute and homeless. What my noble Friend proposes is that there should be two descriptions of reformatories—a reformatory for junior offenders and a reformatory for elder ones, and he quotes the authority of the Committee over which I had the honour to preside as supporting him in that. Now, it is quite true that in Ireland, where there are so many charitable institutions and organizations for dealing with crime and criminal children, we discovered one school which dealt exclusively with these young criminal offenders, but that was an extreme case. It is said that it is harsh and cruel to mix together children of decidedly criminal character and children who are simply waifs and strays, who have not embarked on a criminal career. I do not think myself that there is much difference between such children. The children of the gutter are, after all, hardly distinguishable from those who are brought up for the first time charged with an offence and are sent to industrial schools. My noble Friend all through has been treating the admission of children into industrial schools as if it was a hardship to the children themselves. Against that supposition we have the fact that there is no difficulty in placing the children out at service on leaving the schools. A number of the boys receive special physical training and become members of the Naval and Military Forces. I do not believe that the children suffer from the fact that they have been educated in industrial schools. A "Reformatory" school may perhaps be said to imply some connection with guilt, but there is nothing in the name "Industrial" school which involves any sort of shame. Then there is another omission in the Bill which I will notice. When I was a Member of the other House, I introduced a Bill called the Prevention of Juvenile Crimes Bill, and it contained a clause which enabled children of a woman who had been more than once convicted, and who left her children under 14 years of age without any proper guardianship, to be committed to industrial schools. I cannot very well conceive any class of children who are more properly inmates of industrial schools, and I should have thought the present Bill might have contained a similar clause. When the Bill goes into Committee, these and other points can be dealt with, and I trust that the suggestions which may be made for the improvement of the Bill will have the favourable consideration of Her Majesty's Government. In the meantime, I believe the object of the appointment of the Royal Commission—which comprised many men of eminence, including some Members of the present Government—has been achieved, and its main recommendations will be carried into effect by this measure. The Bill will, I suppose, be referred to one of the Standing Committees, and I have no doubt that in the form in which it will ultimately pass into law, it will prove to be a great national advantage.

*THE EARL OF MEATH: I think that the noble Lord who last spoke is rather in error as to the ease with which children on leaving industrial schools can get employment. Having

had a good deal of experience in the management of industrial schools in Ireland, I can confidently assert that what the noble Lord said is not quite the case as far as that part of the kingdom is concerned. He has asserted that the public, as a general rule, do not consider that there is any shame attached to children who have been brought up in industrial schools. Now, I am afraid that the public do, as a matter of fact, so consider. They ought not to, and that is why I am anxious that Her Majesty's Government should not use their giant strength to crush any suggested alteration in the Bill. The Government will not permit children to go into Her Majesty's Navy from industrial schools. In the case of our schools in Ireland, we have attempted to get our children into the Navy, but the Government have declined to take them. It is said that there is difficulty in dealing with the junior class of reformatory cases; but this Bill has, as has the Reformatory Bill which is now before one of the Grand Committee's, clauses under which those cases can be dealt with summarily. I think your Lordships will agree that the Bill makes a great mistake in mixing up two classes of children—those who are simply brought before Magistrates from causes over which they have no control, such as destitution and poverty, and those who are charged with some criminal act. I perfectly agree with the noble Lord opposite, that it is iniquitous to whip a child because he is habitually begging, or under improper guardianship, or wandering about without any home, or frequenting the company of reputed thieves or prostitutes. All those cases, especially the last three, are quite beyond the control of the poor unfortunate child, and to whip that child is iniquitous. Then, I agree with the noble Lord (Lord Leigh) in his criticisms of Clause 12, Sub-section B, that it is perfectly monstrous to give back the child to the parent for the purpose of punishment. What are your Lordships doing if you pass this Bill? You are saying that when a child is under "improper guardianship" (these are the words) he may be brought before a Magistrate, and the Magistrate may give up the child to his improper guardian to be beaten perhaps within an inch of his life. It does not seem to me that it is common sense or justice to enact that a poor unfortunate child should be punished by an improper guardian, or even that he should be whipped because he happens to be without a home, or happens to be found in the house of a reputed thief or prostitute. Suppose a child whose father is in prison is sent to the house of some prostitute, how is he to know the character of the woman? I cannot think that Her Majesty's Government will pass such a Bill as this without more consideration than has yet apparently been given to it. I hope also that the remark which has fallen from the noble Lord behind me (Lord Aberdare) in regard to the omission from this Bill of any clause dealing with children of parents who are in prison may be well considered, and that some clause will be added; because I cannot help thinking that those industrial schools which are at this moment in existence for the purpose of rescuing the children of those who are in prison or convicted of crime, ought to be assisted. The noble Lord (Lord Aberdare) has stated that in Dublin a good many cases get into the industrial schools which ought not to have been sent there. I have no doubt whatever that the accusation is correct; but it is not the case in regard to all schools, for I know that, so far as regards the schools with which I have been connected, no cases have been sent there which ought not to have been. I think there can be no doubt that in Ireland we have certainly improved upon what has been done in England. We have not had sent to our industrial schools any children who have been convicted of crime; we have kept a complete distinction between the two, and we feel all the more hurt because in England you choose to mix up industrial and reformatory cases, that therefore our children who are not criminals should be branded as criminals because in this country there is a confusion of ideas. It has been stated that we ought not to call upon the ratepayers to support the very poor children. It is, however, singular, that the noble Lord who advanced that argument supported these very clauses by which we are called upon to support those who are habitually begging or receiving alms. Therefore I think that argument entirely falls to the ground.

*EARL STANHOPE: My Lords, although I do not happen to know anything about industrial schools in Ireland, I do know something of them in this country, and in answer to my noble Friend, Lord Meath, I may say that, as far as my experience goes, there is no shame attaching to the boys educated in these schools. I speak more especially as Chairman of the Kent County Industrial School at Ashford. We have obtained admission for some boys into the Royal Navy without difficulty, and also into the Army, as bandsmen. The discipline at that school is such as to give to boys who have had the misfortune to lose one or both parents the opportunity of starting well in life and becoming useful citizens. I entirely disagree with the arguments which have been put before us by the noble Lord, Lord Norton. He seems to think that this Bill applies to reformatories. It has little to do with reformatories; it only applies to industrial schools. Moreover, it is a consolidating Bill. Half the clauses it contains have long been the law of the land. In fact, the clause which met with such strong opposition from my noble Friend, Lord Leigh, that which relates to the punishment by imprisonment of boys who destroy the property of the school or who run away from school, simply embodies what has long been the law. As regards whipping, that is a different matter. It is really put as an alternative, at the discretion of the Magistrate, to sending the boy to an industrial school. Where a child is brought up for stealing apples, or for some minor offence of that description, the Magistrate is empowered, instead of sending him to prison or committing him to an industrial school, to order him to be whipped. My Lords, I regard the measure now before the House as a most useful one, and, from the support it has received from the noble Lord who was Chairman of the Royal Commission on Industrial Schools, I think we may trust that the Bill will not only obtain acceptance here but also in another place.

THE EARL OF MOUNT-EDGCUMBE: I would like to make an observation with regard to the supposed difficulty in obtaining the admission into the Navy of boys educated in industrial schools. I am connected with an industrial training ship, which is on the same lines as an industrial school, and there are regulations by which the transference of the boys from the ship to the Royal Navy is facilitated. In fact, a grant of £25 is given for each boy who is prepared and fitted to go into the Royal Navy. We also send many boys as bandsmen into the Army. In the cases where difficulties have been experienced, as referred to by the noble Lord the Earl of Meath, I should think the boys have been deficient in size or in age, or not properly qualified for the naval service.

*LORD LINGEN: In the few remarks I have to make I propose, my Lords, to address myself to the Amendment which has been moved by Lord Norton. Those of your Lordships who have had the advantage not only of hearing Lord Norton's speech, but of reading the very able paper which has been generally circulated, will have no difficulty in agreeing, without exception, to the principles he proposes as the basis of the treatment of the children who are the subjects of this Bill. I am sure no one can address your Lordships with greater authority on this matter than the noble Lord. As I had the honour of serving under him in the Department of the Education Committee some thirty years ago, I speak from my own knowledge when I say that it is to the noble Lord that a very great part of the immense improvement which has taken place in the treatment of unfortunate children is due. I venture, however, to think that in his Amendment he has somewhat confused two questions which are different, the one as to the character which industrial schools should bear, and the other as to the authority which should admit children into them. The authority at present which grants the license is the Secretary of State. But that was not always so, as would appear from the speech of the noble Lord and other speeches which we have heard this evening. Originally it was the Committee of Council on Education which granted the licenses, and it was only in view of the abuses which arose under that system that a change was made. The noble Lord was for many years a very strong advocate of restoring that power of licensing to the Committee of Council on Education, and I am exceedingly glad to see that in

the Amendment which he has moved to this Bill he has not reverted to the earlier proposition, but merely urges the substitution of the Local Government Board for the Secretary of State as the Licensing Authority. I think your Lordships will all admit that a distinction must be made between the various classes of children with whose education the State concerns itself. There are the children of the independent labourers, there are the children of those against whom nothing is proved except their poverty, and there are the children of those against whom something more is either proved or may be reasonably presumed. The noble Lord's Amendment admits that the children of the independent workmen are to be separated from the rest, but he maintains that if you cease to make the Education Department the Licensing Authority you should not go to the Secretary of State, who represents to some extent the Criminal Law, but you should go to the Local Government Board, which represents poverty, and that you should treat the child in a reformatory as a pauper and not, even in any inchoate degree, as a criminal. With that as an object I entirely concur; but I should venture to say that it does not follow, because the Secretary of State is the Licensing Authority of these reformatory schools, that therefore they should be conducted on the footing of prisons. If your Lordships will look at Section 3 of this Bill, you will see that the greatest latitude is given to the Secretary of State in his power of classifying these reformatories and of prescribing the rules under which they are to be managed. In the same way, in Section 4 due provision is made for the inspection of them. I have heard one name mentioned in the noble Lord's speech which certainly ought never to be mentioned without honour in connection with this subject, and that is the name of the late Mr. Sydney Turner, who was the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools on their original reference to the Home Office. His inspection, I am sure, would compare with that of any Inspector whatever. My Lords, I only wish to press this one point upon your Lordships, that the manner of dealing with these children is not, I think, vitally concerned in the decision between the Home Secretary and the Local Government Board. The Magistrates must, to a large extent, be the administrators of this law. The Magistrates are in connection with the Home Secretary much more than they are with the Local Government Board, and I think that in deciding upon this Amendment your Lordships would perhaps be well advised not without some strong reason to remove the administration of these schools from the authority which now controls them.

*Earl PERCY: My Lords, the criticisms which we have heard of this Bill from all parts of the House have been confined within the scope of the measure, and I feel that it is rather difficult for me to invite the noble Lord who now asks us to give the Bill a Second Reading to extend its provisions; but I wish to say a few words on a class of schools which have not been fully considered, either in this Bill or in the legislation which is already in force. There are in this country a certain number of industrial schools which are maintained by voluntary effort, and these schools receive children, not perhaps coming exactly under the classes mentioned in Clause 10, but classes of quite as deserving a character. The classes I am thinking of most at the present moment is the class of pauper children, and especially girls educated in workhouse schools. These girls grow up in the not too innocent atmosphere of the workhouse school, and they are sent out into the world about the age of 13 or 14 without the slightest knowledge of the world, as shop girls or as maids-of-all-work, and the result is that very many of them come to grief. I want to impress upon the noble Lord that there should be some power of committing — or, if you do not like that word because it savours of penal discipline — there should be power to remit or detain these children in industrial schools until they attain the age of at least fifteen. Then there is another difficulty, that under the present regulations it is impossible to certify such schools as I have mentioned, because in these schools elementary education is not given. I submit that the class of schools to which I am referring is one which is generally filled with children who have completed their elementary education, but who are admitted at an age when they require some training in

manual labour, needlework, laundry work, and things of that kind, combined with religious and moral training to enable them to become respectable and independent. Surely it is possible to put some provision in this Bill by which schools such as these could be certified. The expense to the public would be nominal. There would only be the cost of inspection, and I believe no one who is acquainted with the subject can have any doubt that the advantages resulting to this class of children would be as great or greater than those which the Bill will confer upon children of a criminal or quasi-criminal class.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I would like to say one word upon the matter to which the noble Earl has just referred, because the subject came before a Committee over which I had the honour to preside. I understood the noble Earl to suggest that these industrial schools ought to be extended so as to include pauper girls generally. In the first place, I would point out that there are a number of very large schools indeed now existing to which girls are sent from the various Unions. There has been great controversy as to whether those schools are successful or not. This is not a fitting opportunity of discussing the question, but many people think that by the instruction that is given there the children are too much removed from general society, if I may so call it, and when they go out from these schools they are unable to cope with the ordinary incidents of life. As against that system other systems have been strongly advocated. There is much to be said in favour of the boarding-out system. I do not think it would be possible to mix together schools which deal with children of undoubtedly the vagrant and street-arab class with the schools for children who may, through mere poverty, have to receive parish relief. I am certain that the population generally would not regard that with favour, and that the thing would not work. Neither do I think that it would be at all desirable to have schools in which girls were generally detained until the age of 16. Certainly, in the rural districts my personal experience is that it is most desirable that girls should go out to service long before that age. Remember it is not merely instruction in reading and writing, and so forth, which is needed, but actual experience of domestic service by which the child can afterwards obtain a living, and if the child does not begin early it will be found extremely difficult subsequently to train it to proper habits. That seems to me to be a very important consideration indeed. At the same time I am far from being enamoured of the workhouse schools. Workhouse schools are a necessity, but in many respects I think they are institutions of which we have no reason to be proud. I merely wish to enter my protest against a proposition which, though at first sight it has some attractive features, will be found in practice, I think, not to work well—to mix up poor relief with the system of industrial schools.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: Taken as a whole, I think this Bill is very satisfactory and reflects great credit upon the Government. I am glad that the present system of inspection is not to be interfered with. There is one clause I would like to call attention to, and that is Clause 18, which enables the Secretary of State to order that a child may be transferred from a certified reformatory school to a certified industrial school. The importance of keeping the two classes of schools absolutely separate is, I think, undeniable, and anything that tends at all to increase the suspicion which exists now as to industrial schools is open to very grave objections. I would ask whether it would not be possible to introduce a clause giving the County Councils power if they think fit to grant superannuations to the officers of these schools. From all I have seen of the working of these schools I am convinced that this power is needed in the interests of the work itself. I thank my noble Friend for the great impetus he has given to the day industrial schools, and I rejoice that experience has shown that they are really valuable institutions. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Aberdare) will remember that when, in another place, he first proposed to introduce those schools, he met with very bitter opposition, and there was a severe fight before they were established. It is a source of satisfaction to see that they have turned out, as the supporters of them anticipated, of very great aid in coping with the

difficulties which poverty casts in the way of education.

*EARL FORTESCUE: There can be no doubt after what has been said in the course of this debate of the very great importance of keeping up the distinction between Reformatory and Industrial Schools in the public mind, as well as in their working, in the interests of the children. As regards the prospect of finding the children respectable and independent occupation on their leaving schools, it seems to me that all the argument is on the side of my noble Friend Lord Norton, who introduced the Amendment, and against perpetuating this blending of the two classes of schools. How strong the confusion at present is is evident from some of the speeches that have been made this afternoon. The noble Lord opposite spoke again and again of Reformatory Schools in commenting upon the clauses of this, which is an Industrial Schools Bill, and when so experienced an official, as the noble Lord falls into that mistake, we may guess what the general impression of the public out-of-doors must be. I have no doubt that the fact that the person who is to inspect the Reformatory Schools is also appointed to inspect the Industrial Schools tends still more to blend the two classes of schools together in the general view of the public. I think it would be very hard to deal with the children, who, though they come from not the most respectable class of society, are not criminals, in such a way as to place them in a quasi-criminal aspect before the public; and what my noble Friend said upon the Royal Navy shows that one Department even of Her Majesty's Government rather shares that general impression. I think the fact that the Royal Navy will not take boys from Industrial Schools adds a strong argument in favour of the Amendment, which I intend to support. There are one or two clauses of the Bill which I think are likely to be very useful, but I protest against the age of 16, which was advocated as being the age up to which it is desirable or reasonable to detain, as a rule, children of either sex in the workhouse. It has been very truly observed that by the age of thirteen and a half children of average strength and intelligence are capable of wholly, or almost wholly, earning or contributing towards their livelihood. It is a great injustice to the ratepayers that they should have to maintain children for two or three years after they are capable of maintaining themselves, in order that they may ultimately be enabled to take situations superior to those which are open to the children of independent labourers. I quite agree with the noble Earl (the Earl of Kimberley) as to the immense importance of beginning practical training—not theoretical training, but training in the actual business of life, in service or in actual work—at an earlier age than 16. The greatest care is requisite in the working of this boarding-out system. Nothing can work more satisfactorily in cases where there are good masters and good mistresses; but where under the name of parochial apprenticeship it prevailed, as it did in the Western Counties, till abolished with general approval by the new Poor Law, and the unwilling child of unwilling parents was bound to an unwilling master or mistress, it was often pretty much like white slavery. If it is true that children can earn their maintenance between 13 or 14, and you hand them over to people with whom they are boarded out till 16 years of age, those foster parents are given two years of very valuable service at the expense, in one way or another, of the public. Boarding out may be very desirable, but only up to an age certainly far below 16. That is a matter which can be considered in Committee. Then my noble Friend (Lord Leigh) found great fault with Clause 53, under which children who break the rules of the school are liable to be imprisoned. It seems to me that the clause authorizing whipping would be very advantageously applied to such cases. We do not want to make poor children, for minor offences of this kind, gaol birds at an early age. I do not know why the children of the most destitute, or least respectable, parents in the community should consider that such an indelible disgrace is inflicted upon them as it is suggested that the punishment of whipping is considered to be. My own strong conviction is that they would go out none the less fitted for good service because they had had a good whipping for some infringement of the rules of the school. On the whole,

the Bill seems to me to introduce some valuable improvements upon the previous law, but it is unfortunate that it tends to keep up in the public mind the notion of the blending of reformatories, which are criminal schools, with industrial schools which are intended to be preventive.

LORD ABERDARE: As it has been suggested that it is cruel and even wicked that children under 14 should be whipped because they happen to be without a home or frequenting bad society, and as, according to my reading of the Bill, there is no power of whipping given in those cases, I would ask the noble Viscount opposite whether the noble Earl (the Earl of Meath) has not, in fact, confused two different parts of the Bill?

*VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: I should have dealt with that point even had not my noble Friend called my attention to it. It is quite obvious that the provisions as to whipping applies only to "offences," and not to the case of children found to be under improper guardianship, or homeless, and so forth. It should be noticed also with what precautions the whipping is guarded both as to instrument and number of strokes. The noble Earl (the Earl of Meath) was also in error when he stated that the Bill mixed up the case of destitute children and that of criminal children. It is quite clear that the two classes are kept distinct. In the first place, the destitute children are provided for by the Poor Law. Such children are either educated in the workhouse schools, or they are sent to an ordinary school by and at the cost of the Guardians. What these clauses are aimed at is the class of vicious children, or children whose parents are vicious. With regard to the proposal to remove these schools from the control of the Home Office and place them under the Local Government Board, I think such a change as this ought not to be made unless very good cause is shown, and this has not been done. The industrial schools under the Home Office have in the past performed their work most effectively, and there is no reason for making the change suggested. The administration of any Industrial Schools Act must necessarily involve the employment of Magistrates and police, and it thus comes more naturally under the supervision of the Home Office. I do not believe that children under the present law are in any way tainted by their training in the industrial schools. If their taint has been too deep before they get there, that is not the fault of the industrial schools, and, as a matter of fact, employers are quite willing to take children from industrial schools into their service. My Lords, this discussion has been mostly a criticism of the details of the Bill. I hope the House will now read it a second time, and in Committee the suggestions of noble Lords, several of whom have special knowledge on this subject, will be carefully listened to by my noble Friend who is in charge of the Bill.

*EARL BROWNLOW: The Amendment moved by my noble Friend (Lord Norton) deals first of all with the line to be drawn between children sent to reformatory schools and children sent to industrial schools. It is thought that it would be very undesirable to treat as criminals and send to a reformatory school young children guilty of merely trifling offences. The subject has been carefully considered. It has been urged by Lord Norton that the industrial schools should be handed over to the Local Government Board. The noble Lord seems to have changed his views upon the subject, for some time ago it was his view that they should be handed over to the Education Department. There are great objections to the course my noble Friend suggests. The industrial schools are intended to educate and train children who are in danger of falling into crime, so that they may become decent members of society, and it is not desirable to hand such schools over to a Department which has nothing to do with the prevention of crime. Again, the Local Government Board would either have to get a staff of Inspectors for this particular purpose, or otherwise they would hand over the inspection of these schools to their own Inspectors of Union Workhouse Schools, and I think it would be very undesirable to connect these schools, which are intended to prevent crime in the future, with Workhouse Schools. I may further point out that Lord Norton stood alone on the Royal Commission with regard to this matter. As to the question of whipping, the noble Viscount who last spoke has rightly expressed what is the

intention of the Bill. If the wording is not sufficiently clear, the necessary Amendments can easily be made in Committee.

Amendment (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

Original motion agreed to.

Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to the Standing Committee for Bills relating to Law, &c.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent:

Customs and Inland Revenue.
Naval Defence.
Removal of Wrecks Act (1877) Amendment.
Public Libraries Act (1855) Amendment.
National Debt.
Commissioners for Oaths.

THE CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSIONERS.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY asked the First Church Estates Commissioner whether the Commissioners would pay half the legal expenses in the case of gifts or sales of sites for parsonages and burial grounds, as well as in the case of sites for churches?

*EARL STANHOPE: In the conveyance of additional burial grounds the Commissioners already pay half the costs of their own solicitors, and where they have property the whole cost of the conveyance. In the case of parsonage sites the Commissioners pay their solicitors' costs where they have property, but where this is not the case they have not hitherto been able to pay the legal charges. I may say, however, that the question is under the consideration of the Board.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1883) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 87.)

Read 3ª (according to order): Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

PALATINE COURT OF DURHAM BILL. (No. 71.)

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ASSIZES RELIEF BILL. (No 96.)
ARBITRATION BILL (No. 97.)

House in Committee, on Re-commitment (according to order): Amendments made: The Report thereof to be received on Monday next.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE (MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS) BILL.

A Bill to enable women to vote in municipal elections—Was presented by the Lord Denman; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Tuesday next. (No. 103.)

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, to Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 31st May, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

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IRELAND—FAIR RENT APPLICATIONS.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the ordnance maps required by Sub-Commissions on the hearing of fair rent applications are now provided free of charge by the Land Commission; and whether a similar provision will be made as regards fair rent applications tried in the County Court?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): It is the case that the maps required are now supplied free of expense. I am not aware whether a similar provision will be made in regard to fair rent applications tried in the County Court.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION—THE *TIMES* WITNESS (MULLETT).

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether James Mullett was charged with having committed an offence at Downpatrick Railway Station on the occasion of his removal to England as a witness for the *Times* at the Royal Commission, and what was the nature of the offence; whether he was tried for this alleged

offence in the usual way by a visiting Justice, or how was he tried; and what were the term and nature of the punishment inflicted on him therefor?

MR. MADDEN: I must ask the hon. Member to postpone the question.

REMOVAL OF A LETTER-BOX.

MR. PATRICK JOSEPH O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that the letter-box erected some two years since at Lisenisky Cross, in the postal district of Nenagh, County Tipperary, has been suddenly removed without any intimation to the ratepayers in the locality for whose accommodation it was put up; on what grounds has it been so removed; and whether, having regard to its utility for the public convenience, he will be pleased to order that this letter-box be replaced?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): I am having inquiry made as to the statement contained in the hon. Member's question, and no time shall be lost in informing him of the result.

TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, considering that the Telegraph Estimates for 1889-90 show an increase in the senior class at the Central station of 14 over the Estimates for 1889-90, and that clerks have been waiting at the maximum of the first class for over two years, he will now take steps to fill up the vacancies?

MR. RAIKES: The 14 additional appointments to which the hon. Member refers have already been filled up, and there is at the present time no vacancy in the senior class.

THE CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the practice in the Central Telegraph Office, that some officers of a lower class from time to time perform superior duties, applies to clerks of the first class, many of whom have been waiting over two years at £140 per annum; whether this is in accordance with "the Fawcett Scheme," which provides that work should be paid for according to its quality, and why these officers have been kept so long at £140 a year, while performing the same duties as officers receiving £150, with an annual increase of £8, up to £190 yearly; and whether, considering the necessity for so employing first-class clerks on superior duties, he will consider the desirability of increasing the number of senior clerks?

*MR. RAIKES: It is in accordance with the Fawcett scheme that officers of a lower class should occasionally perform superior duties, and no other scheme would provide against such a contingency. As to the rest of the hon. Member's question, I can only repeat what I stated in this House on the 9th inst.—that the complements of the various classes having been fixed after careful consideration, I am not prepared to recommend any increase of them at present.

IRELAND—RICHMOND PRISON, DUBLIN.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the city of Dublin has been compensated to any extent, in any form, for the outlay incurred by the city in erecting and maintaining the Richmond Prison; and, if not, whether the Government will consider the question of compensation, the building having been recently appropriated by the State?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The question of outlay by the Local Authority is not confined to the case of Richmond Prison, but is a ground common to all local prisons transferred to the General Prisons Board under the Prisons Act of 1878. No direct compensation has been given in any case, nor was any such contemplated by the Act; but by the operation of the Act the several Local Authorities have been relieved from the whole annual cost of maintenance, which theretofore devolved upon them.

THE DRAPERS' COMPANY'S ESTATES.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the Land Purchase Commissioners have sent the Papers respecting the action of the Drapers' Company under Lord Ashbourne's Act to the Attorney General?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot give an answer to this question to-day, but I am authorized to say that there will be, if necessary, a communication between the Land Commissioners and the Attorney General.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact that only 21 Poor Law Unions in Ireland, out of a total of 161, are now contributory under the National School Teachers (Ireland) Act, 1875; and whether, considering the almost total failure of this measure to effect the intended improvement in the condition of the Irish National School teachers, Her Majesty's Government will take some steps during the present Session to increase the salaries of this important body of public servants, whose incomes are admittedly very small.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The number of Contributory Unions is 31. As my hon. Friend is aware, the question of the salaries of school teachers is one that has engaged the attention of successive Governments. It has always been felt impossible to increase the State contribution to school teachers' salaries in view of the fact that the contribution to this purpose in Ireland is enormously in excess of the similar contribution in England and Scotland. Any plan which can be suggested which does not involve a serious increase to the burden on the Exchequer will be most carefully considered by the Government.

THE FALCARRAGH EVICTIONS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland whether he is aware that, on Friday evening last, at the Petty Sessions Court, at Falcarragh, five women and two men, who were unable to speak or understand English, were brought up before Mr. Ulick Bourke, R.M., charged with obstructing and resisting bailiffs and police during the evictions at Glashercoo, and were sent to Derry Gaol, on remand, till the 4th prox.; whether the evidence against them, having been taken down in English, the written depositions were translated into Irish in their presence, the interpreter being Head Constable Mahony; whether Mr. Bourke invited, through the interpreter, these prisoners to make statements, without having previously given them the usual warning that what they said might be used in evidence against them; whether he is aware that the persons charged made admissions in reply to the questions of Head Constable Mahony, as interpreter, incriminating themselves, and which, if used in evidence against them on trial, or by the police meantime in working up the charges against them, will prejudice them in their trial; and whether, taking into consideration that these people were being evicted from their cabins when these alleged offences were committed, and are now deprived of their homes, that they will have suffered ten days' imprisonment already, and this alleged departure from the usual custom in Petty Sessions Courts, the Crown proposes to press these charges any further?

MR. MADDEN: The persons referred to were brought before the Magistrate under arrest. Depositions were taken as soon as possible in the presence of the prisoners and interpreted to them. The interpreter was the Petty Sessions clerk, and not a policeman as alleged. The prisoners were not invited to make statements, but were afforded an opportunity of asking questions of the witnesses. They made no admissions, and no caution was necessary in the case. They were offered release on bail, and it was only on their refusal to give bail that they were committed to prison.

THE LORD LIEUTENANCY.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he has any objection to state the date upon which the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland was definitely offered to the Earl of Zetland by Lord Salisbury?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I regret it is impossible to give the hon. Member the exact date of the offer, as no record of it has been kept, but it was made some three or four weeks ago.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Is the right hon. gentleman able to tell me if it is true as reported by a news agency last night that Lord Zetland has taken the Lord Lieutenancy only on the

condition that he retains it for a year and then resigns? If that is the case will the usual allowance of £5,000 to the incoming Lord Lieutenant be given, or will the same establishment be handed over to his successor without the further charge?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: If the hon. Member had much experience of newspaper paragraphs he might have saved his own time and that of the House by asking whether there was any foundation for the statement. There is no authority whatever for it.

MR. MACNEILL: The statement appeared in the *Times*.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE ISLAND OF LEWIS.

MR. ANGUS SUTHERLAND (Sutherlandshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government intends to grant a subsidy towards, or otherwise assist in, the formation of a railway from Garve to Ullapool, in the county of Ross, and also towards the formation of tramways, piers, and harbours in the Island of Lewis; and, if so, whether the claims of other localities in the Highlands will receive equal consideration?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The question of the hon. Member with reference to any public expenditure for railways or harbours in the Island of Lewis is premature. I understand that the Secretary for Scotland intends personally to visit the island during the Whitsuntide recess, and to inform himself on the spot as to the various plans which have been unofficially submitted to the Government.

FRENCH SHIPPING BOUNTIES.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that in a despatch from Earl Granville, when Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, dated from the Foreign Office 30th July, 1880, to Mr. Adams, the following passage occurs relative to the bounties given by the French Government in aid of shipbuilding and the shipping interest in France:—

"If these bounties do not in precise terms constitute a violation of the stipulations of the Commercial Treaties between Great Britain and France, at the same time it is a fair matter of representation that such bounties are contrary to the spirit and intentions of those Treaties, and will in another way produce the very effect which their stipulations with reference to Import Duties are intended to prevent."

Whether the French Government still continue the bounties they gave on the construction of iron vessels in French dockyards—namely, asum of £2 8s. per ton, on the construction of wooden vessels 16s. per ton, and a further bounty of 10s. per ton on the machinery and engines in those vessels; whether these bounties equal about 20 or 25 per cent of the average cost of the building of those ships; and, whether they still continue to give a bounty on every 1,000 miles which French ships run; and, if so, what is its amount?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): (1.) The quotation is not textually correct; the exact phraseology employed is on page 6 of Parliamentary Paper No. 40 (1880.) (2.) Yes, this arrangement holds good till January, 1891. (3.) We cannot say. (4.) The precise manner in which this bounty is worked is explained on pp. 21-23 of No. 14 Commercial, 1889. The amounts paid for bounties generally from 1881 to 1886 are given on page 25 of same Blue Book, and amounted in 1886 to about £726,000.

MR. WEBSTER: Is the first paragraph only textually incorrect or is it incorrect in substance?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The sense itself is considerably affected by an alteration in the construction.

RABIES.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the fact that the application of the muzzle to dogs in London from November, 1885, to December, 1886, reduced rabies, then epidemic, to a minimum, and that, since the withdrawal of the muzzling regulations, rabies has been steadily increasing, and is now rapidly assuming the character of the epidemic form of five years ago, he will press upon the Chief Commissioner of Metropolitan Police the extreme advisability of reinstating the muzzle; and whether he will undertake to see that communications are made to

the County Councils and other Local Authorities to ensure the simultaneous application of the same restrictive measures throughout the kingdom, so that the disease may not merely be temporarily checked in one district, but eradicated from the country?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): It appears from a return which I have obtained from the police that the number of mad dogs, and dogs suspected of being mad, killed in the streets for 1887 and 1888, when there were no regulation in force, were 141 and 190 respectively, as compared with 429 and 355 for the years 1886 and 1885. This year so far 83 have been killed. These figures do not justify the opinion that this epidemic is increasing at an alarming rate. The Rabies Order issued by the Privy Council in 1887 has made the Local Authorities (in London the Metropolitan Board of Works and now the County Council) the regulating authority on this subject, instead of the police. I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that he has recently called the attention of the London County Council to this subject, and the question of issuing regulations is now before that body. All Local Authorities in the country have power to enforce muzzling, but in the opinion of the Privy Council Office it is doubtful whether it would be judicious to order it in districts where there is no disease. The Privy Council, as the Central Authority in the matter of rabies, are, however, anxious to secure uniformity throughout the country, and their action will very much depend on what regulations the Local Authority for the Metropolis may think fit to issue.

PAISLEY POST OFFICE.

MR. BARBOUR (Paisley): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if the site for the New Post Office at Paisley has been definitely secured; if the plans for the buildings have been prepared; and in view of the insufficiency and unsuitability of the present office, when they will be proceeded with?

*MR. RAIKES: An application is before the Treasury for authority to acquire a site in County Square for the proposed new Post Office at Paisley. If authority is given, building plans will be prepared in due course.

CHARGE OF DESERTION FROM THE *CALLIOPE.*

MR. BALLANTINE (Coventry): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether Thompson, the man who underwent 90 days' arrest upon an unfounded charge that he was a deserter from H.M.S. *Calliope* named Floyd, did not demand at the time of his arrest that his parents living at Coventry should be communicated with to prove that he was Thompson, not Floyd; whether the officer who passed the sentence upon Thompson suffered him to undergo it without taking this means to test his statement; whether the said officer, having presumably Floyd's description in his possession, failed to notice that Thompson was two and a-half inches shorter, and five years younger than the description; whether the period between the desertion in Australia and the arrest in England being twenty days did not render it impossible that the deserter and the prisoner could be the same person; and whether he will have compensation awarded to Thompson for the wrong he admits he has suffered?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord J. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The report from the Chief Constable at Derby shows that Thompson on arrest, so far from demanding that his parents should be communicated with as to his identity, distinctly stated that he was a deserter from the Royal Navy, and that he had joined that service under the assumed name of Floyd. Thompson made no application whatever to the captain of the *Duke of Wellington* to have his statement tested by communication with his parents. Thompson's appearance, apparent age, and marks on his person, namely—two letters tattooed, either W. T. or W. F.—agreed with the description of Floyd, the difference in height being accounted for, in the opinion of the captain of the *Duke of Wellington*, by natural growth since date of description. By the *Police Gazette* of the 1st of January last, Floyd is described as having deserted on the 9th of November, 1888, and as Thompson was not arrested till the 27th of June, 1889, the period between the desertion of Floyd and the arrest of Thompson was 78 days, a period ample for the passage from Australia to Eng-

land. It was not until later that it was alleged by Thompson's mother that he had not left home until the 1st of December. In addition to admitting his desertion and his identity with Floyd to the police, Thompson confessed in the orderly-room before the commanding officer of the Derbyshire Militia, into which regiment he had enlisted, that his statement on the above points was true. The man when before the captain of the *Duke of Wellington* did say that he was the wrong man, but in a hesitating and shuffling way. He had also given two different addresses as to his home in Coventry. I am making further investigations into this curious case, but I am not prepared to now say that it is one for compensation.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow College): How can the fact that Thompson is two and a-half inches shorter than Floyd be accounted for by his growth?

LORD G. HAMILTON: The hon. Gentleman is in error; Thompson was nearly two and a-half inches taller than Floyd.

DR. CAMERON: The noble Lord said shorter.

LORD G. HAMILTON: No; that is a mistake.

LOTTERIES AT BAZAARS.

MR. ALFRED EGERTON (Lancashire, S.E., Eccles): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to the fact that, in connection with a bazaar for the Liberal Club at Little Hulton, in the Radcliffe-cum-Farnworth division of Lancashire, a grand draw of prizes has been announced to take place, towards the beginning of July, in the grounds of S. F. Armitage, Esq., J.P., when prizes amounting to £40 in value, including dining-tables, blankets, coals, &c., will be given, the tickets being advertised at 6d. each; and whether these proceedings are in direct contravention of the law; and, if so, whether he will take steps to stop them?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir. I have called the attention of the Chief Constable of Lancashire to the matter, and I am informed by him that, if the police are able to obtain evidence of a breach of the law, they will institute proceedings before the Magistrates.

THE LUNACY COMMISSION.

MR. WILLIAM CORBET (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that many attempts, extending over a number of years, have been made to induce the Lunacy Commissioners to bring out their Annual Report in time for the discussion on the Estimates; whether it is the fact that they have avoided doing so, and that, when late in the year they eventually produce their Report, it is defective in so far as that several important statistical tables are a year in arrear; whether he has observed the following statement in their Report for 1885, page 4:—

"In consequence of a communication from the Home Office last Autumn, pressing for the presentation of their Report at an earlier date in the year than has hitherto been usual, in order that it might be issued whilst the Parliament is sitting, we have hastened its production to the utmost extent possible. In doing so, however, it has been found necessary to postpone a certain amount of statistical information."

Whether he has observed a similar statement in the Report for 1886, page 3; and that in the last Report issued, that for 1887, but not available until 15th August, 1888, the statement is repeated, to account for the fact that these statistical tables to the number of 20, are only brought down to the 31st December, 1886; whether he will require the Commissioners to issue their Annual Report in a complete form in future in time for the discussion on the Estimates; and when their Report for last year will be ready? I also wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will cause the Lunacy Commissioners to give in their annual Report in future a short summary showing the total cost of construction, including additional buildings, improvements, and purchase of land, of all asylums maintained from public sources, to the last day of each year; the total annual cost of maintenance in such asylums, and the annual cost of maintenance of the insane inmates of poor-houses; so that the House may have before it, in a simple and comprehensive form, the actual charge for the insane in each year; and if no authority exists to compel such information to be supplied, whether he will introduce a clause into the Lunacy Acts Amendment

Bill, now before the House, for the purpose?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Lunacy Commissioners that they have been always desirous of completing their Report at the earliest possible period, but have not found it possible to complete the Report in time for discussion on the Estimates, as voluminous returns, not received till the end of February or later, have to be tabulated while the current work of the office must be carried on. The statistical tables referred to were postponed in order to expedite the publication of the Report, as it was found impossible to include them without delaying it. The same course is necessary this year; but the scientific value of these particular tables is not lessened by their being a year old. The Report for 1888 is in an advanced state of preparation, and will probably be presented to the Lord Chancellor soon after the Whitsuntide holidays. A return up to the 1st July, 1887, showing the total cost of construction of all asylums, was made to the House of Commons in 1888, and in the Commissioners' Report of that year (the 42nd), Appendix E, is shown the total outlay in the same year for maintenance and on buildings and repairs account. If desired, the Commissioners in future Reports could show in the same appendix the total expenditure under the same heads up to date, by combining the totals shown in the return with the expenditure for the year. As regards the cost of maintenance of the insane in workhouses, the Commissioners have no certain information, and I am informed by the Local Government Board that there would be great difficulty in keeping the accounts so as to show accurately the separate cost of the insane. The accounts at present do not show the cost of insane inmates apart from the cost of maintenance of the other inmates.

WAR OFFICE CONTRACTS—COLONEL SLADE.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it was with the consent of the War Office that Colonel Slade, to whom a contract was recently given for valises and accoutrements, having no factory of his own, sub-contracted with a firm which had just previously been struck off the list of Government contractors, for supplying bad work and materials; and, if not, when, and how, the War Office was first informed of the fact; whether these articles so supplied have been inspected at Woolwich by an Inspector who has been very intimately associated with with that firm, and by viewers recently connected with it; during what period was Colonel Slade, who claims to be the inventor of this new valise equipment, a member of the Equipment Committee of the War Office; whether Colonel Slade, who received this contract for valise equipment in his own name, is the partner of Colonel Wallace, who has received large subsequent contracts, amounting to 16,000 valises, besides accoutrements; and, whether Colonel Slade, at the time these contracts were given, was himself a member of an important War Office Committee?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, that it was not with the consent of the War Office that Colonel Slade, to whom a contract was recently given for valises and accoutrements, having no factory of his own, sub-contracted with a firm which had just previously been struck off the list of Government Contractors. The War Office first knew of the fact from Mr. Tomlin's evidence before the Lords' Commission. The Inspector and viewers who inspected the goods at Woolwich were formerly, not recently, connected with the firm in question. Colonel Slade had ceased to be a member of the Equipment Committee of the War Office, and the Government had no knowledge of a partnership existing between Colonel Slade and Colonel Wallace.

MR. HANBURY: During what period was Colonel Slade upon the Committee? When did he go, and how long was he there?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I am afraid that I do not remember when he went first, but he ceased to be a member of the Committee before the contract.

MR. HANBURY: In what Vote is the payment of the Small Arms Committee to be found?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I do not think my hon. Friend will find it in any Vote relating to the Department. The only payment was the ordinary allowance to the officers serving.

IRELAND—THE GRAVE OF DISTRICT INSPECTOR MARTIN.

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the following paragraph from the *Donegal Independent*, copied into the *Derry Journal* of last Monday, describing an outrage which has been committed on the grave of the late District Inspector Martin (in Ballyshannon Protestant Churchyard)—

"From time to time Mrs. Martin and her sister, Miss Gray, have laid flowers on the grave, formed, as is not unusual, into wreaths and crosses. At the Easter vestry the floral cross was objected to, but the incumbent (Protestant) stated that any person removing it subjected himself to a severe penalty. Within the past week, however, some person has wrenched the flowers from their fastenings and pulled them to pieces, not on one, but on four or five occasions. . . . . The matter has now been placed in the hands of the police."

And is there any foundation for these statements, and, if so, what steps, if any, have the police taken to bring guilt home to the perpetrators of the outrage?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I regret to say that it is the case that on more than one occasion floral crosses have been removed from the grave in question. The police have no trustworthy evidence as to the persons who have acted thus; but they have been directed to watch the place, and they will be prepared, should the acts be repeated, and a prosecution follow, to identify the offenders.

GUNWHARF BARRACKS, PORTSMOUTH.

MR. MULLHOLAND (Londonderry, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to two cases of enteric fever among the Officers of the Royal Artillery stationed at the Gunwharf Barracks, Portsmouth; whether it is a fact that the responsible Military Authorities have, for several months past, been aware of the dangerous sanitary condition of these buildings; and, whether it is his intention to institute an inquiry into the causes of the continued occupation of these unhealthy barracks?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: My attention has been called to these cases, but it is not my intention to institute any further inquiry into the matter. These barracks will be evacuated next week, owing to their insanitary condition, and this is one of the cases which has forced upon my attention the necessity for a general barrack scheme.

WAGES DISPUTE.

MR. JACOBY (Derbyshire, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that the *employés* of Messieurs James Oakes and Co., of Riddings, Derbyshire, received a circular from the firm refusing to cancel a reduction of wages, and containing the following passage:—

"Under these circumstances any workman in the pipe pits who feels himself aggrieved by this decision can immediately be set at liberty to seek employment elsewhere."

That on receipt of this circular men who left Messieurs James Oakes and Co. and sought employment at other works in the district, where hands were being taken on, were refused employment on their admission that they had left Messieurs Oakes and Co., and that other men, who stated that they had not come from Messieurs Oakes, were employed, and that in consequence a considerable number of men are denied employment, and reduced to great want and distress; and, whether an inquiry will be instituted and a prosecution ordered if these allegations are substantiated?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I have received a communication relating to a trade dispute between this firm and their men. The men left their work without giving notice and refused an advance in wages of from 5 to 19 per cent. to date from June 3rd. I have no information touching the alleged inability of the men to obtain work, nor of their alleged condition in consequence. The answer to the last paragraph is in the negative.

THE SLAVE TRADE.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government have taken any steps to carry out the Resolution of the House of 26th March in regard to the Slave Trade—namely, that it was expedient that steps should be taken to ascertain whether the other Powers signatories to the declarations

against the Slave Trade are willing to meet in conference for the purpose of devising such measures for its repression as may be at the same time effective, and in accordance with justice, and under the regulations of International Law?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Her Majesty's Government lost no time after the Resolution of the House in communicating with the Government of Belgium by whom the initiative will be taken in the invitation of the Powers to a Conference in regard to the Slave Trade. Communications are passing between the two Governments with reference to matters of detail which must be settled as preliminaries, and informal communications have also taken place with the representatives of the other Governments concerned. We believe there is little doubt that the Conference will assemble during the present year.

MR. S. BUXTON: Is it proposed to lay any Paper on the Table in reference to the subject?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: No, Sir. It would be quite unusual at such a stage to lay correspondence on the Table.

IRELAND—NEWCASTLE HARBOUR, COUNTY DOWN.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the present dangerous state of Newcastle Harbour, county Down; whether he is aware that the Grand Jury of Down pointed out at the time the faulty construction of the pier, and protested against the wasteful expenditure of the money of the cesspayers; and whether, having regard to the quantity of fish which abound in Dundrum Bay, the utter want of protection to the Newcastle fishermen, the danger to their lives, and the loss to the country, he will take into consideration the desirability of advising a grant to be made for the purpose of providing a suitable harbour at Newcastle?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I have nothing to add to the answer I gave to a similar question by the hon. Member last year. The pier in question was handed over so long ago as 1854 to the Grand Jury who then became responsible for its maintenance. The pier was injured by a storm in 1868, and its present condition appears to be due to the fact that it was not then repaired.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION—THE *TIMES* WITNESS MULLETT.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether James Mullett was charged with having committed an offence at Downpatrick Railway Station on the occasion of his removal to England as a witness for the *Times* at the Royal Commission, and what was the nature of the offence; whether he was tried for this alleged offence in the usual way by a visiting Justice, or how was he tried; and what was the term and nature of the punishment inflicted on him therefor?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This question has already been put to my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General, who said that we have no Report on the matter.

MR. M'CARTAN: The Solicitor General said that the Chief Secretary would answer the question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I now repeat, in my own name, what the Solicitor General said for me.

MR. M'CARTAN: What was that?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That I have no Report.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I think we are entitled to have an answer.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no Report upon the subject, but of course the question can be put down again.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will state on what date James Mullett was removed from Downpatrick to Millbank Prison as a witness for the *Times* at the Royal Commission, and also on what date he was brought back to Ireland; how many hours of the 24 was Mullett kept in solitary confinement each day during his stay in Millbank; and how long during the day are convict prisoners usually kept in solitary confinement in English prisons?

MR. MATTHEWS: Prisoner James Mullett was received into Millbank Prison on the 20th November, 1888, and was returned to Ireland on the 19th of March, 1889. During his stay in Millbank he had two hours' exercise daily; he attended chapel every Sunday

and every second weekday. On Sunday the service lasts 45 minutes, on weekdays about 30 minutes; the remainder of the day he was in separate confinement in his cell. Convicts are usually kept in separate and not solitary confinement 22 hours per diem.

MR. SEXTON: During the four months that Mullett was a prisoner in Millbank was any charge made or suggested against him of improper conduct at a railway station in Ireland while on his way to England?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no information on that point.

MR. SEXTON: Was he put in solitary confinement?

MR. MATTHEWS: Nobody now is condemned to solitary confinement. It is simply separate confinement which does not involve solitude. A prisoner may go to chapel and to work.

THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD.

MR. JOHN TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the Education Department have decided that the vacancies in the Westminster Division of the London School Board should be filled up by co-optation; and, whether, if they have so decided, their attention has been called to the Section (36) of the Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, which provides that "vacancies caused by the decision of an Election Court shall be filled by a new election."

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): The Education Department have come to no decision on the subject, but they have stated that they have no power to issue an order directing a new election to fill up the vacancies, and have added that if the School Board think fit to fill up the vacancies by co optation the persons selected will be recognized as members. The Department have had their attention directed to the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act, but nothing in that Act relieves them of their inability to issue an order in such a case.

MR. J. TALBOT: May I ask whether the Department will take the advice of the Law Officers of the Crown in order to arrive at a solution of the question?

SIR W. HART DYKE: If we got the advice of the Law Officers we should be unable to act upon it. Therefore we have taken no steps in the matter.

IRELAND—EVICTIONS—THE OLPHERT ESTATE.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether James M'Ginley, who was evicted from his farm at Falcarragh last Monday, is the same James M'Ginley who, as was deposed at the trial of Messrs. Conybeare and Harrison, purchased his farm, for the sum of £150, from Mr. Wilkinson, the Petty Sessions Clerk of Falcarragh, who, without the knowledge of M'Ginley, and during the negotiations for the sale, entered into an agreement with Mr. Olphert, fixing, for 15 years, the rent of the incoming tenant, and thus depriving him of the right to enter the Land Court and have a fair rent fixed; and, by whom was the said Wilkinson appointed to the office of Petty Sessions Clerk?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General has already answered this question.

MR. MAC NEILL: I will only accept an answer from the right hon. Gentleman.

THE CASE OF "THE QUEEN *V.* HARKIN."

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the decision of the Court of Exchequer in the "Queen *v.* Harkin" can be made available for Members; whether the Court held that in addition to the sentence of six months, with hard labour, the maximum allowed by the terms of the Crimes Act, a further sentence, apparently of indefinite length, may be inflicted in default of sureties for good behaviour; whether he is aware that the Queen's Bench, in "Queen *v.* Harley," decided that there is no appeal from a sentence in default of sureties; and whether, therefore, a sentence can now be imposed under the Crimes Act, one part of which is appealable and the other is not; and a punishment can now be inflicted that was not contemplated by Parliament in passing the Act, whenever the Court, sitting under the Act, orders sureties for good behaviour at

the expiry of a sentence of imprisonment?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the first paragraph of the question, I understand that the interesting decision of the Court of Exchequer will be shortly published in the Reports. I should hope that this would be enough for the right hon. Gentleman; but if he specially desires it, I shall be prepared to lay the decision as a Parliamentary Paper on the Table of the House. The decision of the Court appears to be inaccurately given in the second paragraph of the question. Requiring sureties for good behaviour is not equivalent to inflicting a sentence. It was on this ground, as I am informed, that the Queen's Bench decided that a person imprisoned for not finding sureties had no appeal. His imprisonment depends solely on himself; it would never take place but for his own default, and comes to an end as soon as the required sureties are found. In reply to the last paragraph it does not appear that there is any distinction in this particular between sentences inflicted under the Crimes Act and sentences inflicted under any other statutory summary jurisdiction. That being the case, I presume the facts alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman were present to the minds of Parliament when the Crimes Act was passed.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Not one word of the question upon the Paper has been answered. Is it the fact as stated in the second paragraph that in addition to the sentence of six months, the maximum allowed by the Crimes Act, a further sentence of indefinite length may be inflicted in default of sureties for good behaviour? Did the Court so hold, or did it not? Did the Court hold that one part of a sentence may be appealed against and not the other?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I understand the matter, the prisoner was not sent for punishment at all, in the ordinary sense of the term. That being so, I stated, I believe correctly, that the second paragraph does not give a true representation of the finding of the Court. I also stated the ground on which the decision referred to in the third paragraph was arrived at.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Did the Court hold that a sentence, in addition to a sentence of six months' hard labour, can be given in default of sureties? Is that the fact or not? And does it involve that the Magistrates may inflict a sentence, a portion of which can be appealed and the other portion not?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It does not involve that; but if a prisoner fails to carry out the terms of the sentence, of course he is liable to be detained.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Then the Court have decided apparently, that a man may get a sentence against which under the Crimes Act there is an appeal, but if he fails to find sureties he may be further sentenced, and there is no appeal against such sentence, although it may involve a longer imprisonment.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; there is no appeal.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I accept the right hon. Gentleman's answer.

FLOGGING IN PORTSEA PRISON.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many men have been flogged in Portsea Convict Prison since 1st January, 1889; and, what were their offences?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Directors of the Convict Prisons that no convict has been flogged in Portsea Prison since the 1st of January, 1889.

MR. BLANE: Have any persons been taken from Portsea Prison and flogged for offences committed there, in another prison?

MR. MATTHEWS: I must ask the hon. Member to give notice of that question.

BREACHES OF THE TRUCK ACT.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, during the past six months, several breaches of the Truck Act have been brought to the knowledge of the Inspector of Factories for the South Wales District; and, whether any, and what, action has been taken by the Solicitor to the Treasury to enforce the law?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Chief Inspector of Factories that three cases of violation of the Truck Act have been reported during the last six months to the local Inspector for the South Wales district. In two cases inquiry was made, the result of which

did not justify proceedings being taken. In the third case proceedings have been taken and summonses were heard at Merthyr on the 25th May, and judgment will be given on Monday next.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Was not one of the cases referred to a case in which a reduction was made from a man's wage on account of goods delivered and for cash advanced?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am not able to answer that question. I must ask the hon. Member to give notice of the question or to consult me privately.

MR. BRADLAUGH: My difficulty is that I do not wish to convey an imputation against any person by name.

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no information with me at present which would enable me to answer the question.

IRELAND—ALLEGED ASSAULTS BY POLICE AND EMERGENCY MEN.

MR. BLANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that James M'Ginley and others have been assaulted by police and emergency men whilst in custody of the Authorities; and if the Government will make the necessary inquiry as to the facts of the case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that neither M'Ginley nor any other person was assaulted by the police whilst in the custody of the Authorities.

MR. BLANE: Then why was a medical men called in to attend him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that he was assaulted before he was in the custody of the police.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the report of an outrage alleged to have been perpetrated by emergency men in the employment of the Land Corporation at the village of Gortroe, near Youghal, on the 25th instant; whether it is true that the emergency men in question, as they passed through the village, fired their revolvers at a group of people without any provocation whatever, and that one of the emergency men then descended from the vehicle on which he was seated, reloaded his revolver, and told the people that "he had more ammunition to put through them;" who issued licenses to carry arms to these emergency men; and, whether the police will be directed to make a special inquiry into this case without delay, and to prosecute, if incriminatory evidence is forthcoming?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have received no report on the subject.

MR. CLANCY: The last paragraph of the question requires no report.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must have all the facts before me before I can answer any part of the question.

DISHORNING CATTLE.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the police will be directed to inquire into the recent dishorning of cattle on the Ponsonby estate, near Youghal, and to collect evidence on the subject with a view to prosecution?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The police have been directed to inquire into the matter, and whatever evidence they obtain will be laid before the Attorney General.

PRISON TREATMENT OF MR. FINUCANE, M.P.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Finucane, M.P., has, since his imprisonment, become reduced to an emaciated condition, and is suffering much and constantly from asthma; how long he has now been in prison; what part of the time he has spent in the prison hospital; and, whether he can be further subjected to imprisonment without permanent injury to his health and danger to his life?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the right hon. Gentleman will defer the question until Monday, I will then give him a full answer.

CAPTAIN TORRENS AND MR. OLPHERT.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is true that the 2nd Dragoons, Royal Scots Greys, were recently on duty at the evictions on the Olphert estate, in the county of Donegal; whether Captain J. A. W. O'N. Torrens was in command of a company of the Royal Scots Greys on that occasion; whether he is aware that a circular has been issued in the county of Londonderry, and the North of Ireland generally, bearing the signature of a J. A.

Torrens, Somerset, Colerains, soliciting subscriptions for Mr. Wybrants Olphert, to recoup him for certain rents alleged to have been withheld pending the concession of reductions demanded by his tenantry; whether the Captain J. A. W. O'N. Torrens, given in the Army List as belonging to the 2nd Dragoons, Scots Greys, is the same officer whose name is attached to the circular referred to; and, if so, whether such interference in a political question is permissible on the part of an officer engaged on military duty in the district; and, whether he will take any, and what, steps in the matter?

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: I must ask the hon. Member to put off the question until Monday.

MALTA.

Sir GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that Clause 8 of the Malta Letters Patent of 12th December, 1887, enacts that the elections for the Council of Government shall be by *scrutin de liste* only until otherwise provided for under Clause 42; and that Clause 42 enacts that Clause 8 shall only remain in force until Malta shall have been divided into electoral districts; and that Clause 1 of the Letters Patent of 19th March, 1888, does divide Malta into electoral districts; and whether any election held or to be held after March, 1888, would be legally valid which was not held in accordance with the enactments of the Letters Patent of 19th March, 1888?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Baron H. de Worms, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The purport of Clauses 8 and 42 of the Malta Letters Patent of 12th December, 1887, and Clause 1 of the Malta Letters Patent of 19th March, 1888, is correctly stated in my hon. Friend's question; but he appears to have overlooked Clause 11 of the Letters Patent of 19th March, 1888, which provides that for the purpose of partial elections taking place before the first General Election after the promulgation of those Letters Patent, the laws in force immediately before such promulgation with regard to electoral districts and to elections by the general electors shall remain in force. As no General Election has yet taken place since the promulgation of the Letters Patent of 1888, partial elections are properly held in accordance with the Letters Patent of 1887, and will by the force of that clause be legally valid.

COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board is it the case that the Medical Officer, the Relieving Officer, and the School Attendance Officer of the Midsomer Norton District of the Clutton Union, Somerset, took an active part in the late County Council election for Midsomer, Norton; and whether the Local Government Board approves of persons holding such offices canvassing, serving on election committees, and addressing public meetings on behalf of any candidate at County Council elections for the districts in which they act?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have received no information that would enable me to answer the question; but the Local Government Board have no jurisdiction in the matter.

THE BEHRING SEA FISHERIES.

Dr. CAMERON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to telegrams from America, published in yesterday's papers, stating that great excitement prevails in British Columbia in consequence of British war vessels having been ordered to Behring Sea to protect British sealers, and the fitting out of torpedo boats for the defence of Victoria Harbour, and the fear that these preparations foreboded a rupture between Great Britain and the United States; and if he can give the House any information as to the cause of these alleged warlike demonstrations, or the origin of the alarmist rumours referred to?

*Sir J. FERGUSSON: I stated yesterday that the reports of Her Majesty's ships having received special orders were unfounded; there are no special preparations. It is one of the most difficult things in the world to trace the origin of a rumour. I believe that when un-

founded it generally arises from unauthentic information.

IRELAND—FISHERY PIERS.

MR. PETER M'DONALD (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will cause to be laid upon the Table of the House a Copy of Correspondence between the Irish Harbour Boards and the Treasury and other Departments of the Government in reference to the construction, improvement, and maintenance of harbours and fishery piers in Ireland?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no cognizance of correspondence which may have passed between Irish Harbour Boards and the Treasury. But, so far as the question relates to correspondence with departments under the Irish Government, I am unable to undertake to lay such Papers on the Table, which, so far as I am aware, would be wholly contrary to precedent.

ANSWERING QUESTIONS.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): May I ask whether, at the morning sittings, some arrangement cannot be made by which the House may be saved inconvenience and waste of time by Ministers being in their places to answer questions?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Time and inconvenience would be saved if both Members who ask and those who answer questions were in their places. If the hon. Member will use his influence with hon. Members who ask questions, I will certainly use all my influence to secure the attention of Ministers.

MR. H. GARDNER: The right hon. Gentleman will recollect that I have not the same power over private Members that he has over Ministers.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. MACNEILL: I desire to make an explanation with regard to question No. 20. You, Sir, called out my name, but the Chief Secretary was not in his place and I could not put the question to him, although the question was an important one relating to the administration of justice. The Solicitor General was in his place, but he did not rise to answer the question. I would not object but for the fact that the moment the Chief Secretary entered the House the Solicitor General left it, so that between the two I got no answer at all.

COURSE OF BUSINESS.

MR. S. BUXTON: I beg to ask what business will be taken at the morning sitting after the holidays?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Supply.

MR. S. BUXTON: What Supply?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Either the Army or the Navy Estimates.

MR. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has come to any decision with respect to the discussion on bi-metallism?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have not yet received any communication from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford (Mr. Chaplin), nor from hon. Gentlemen opposite, as to their wishes in the matter. If I can make an announcement on the subject before the close of the morning sitting I shall do so, but failing that, the arrangements already made with regard to Tuesday will hold good.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): The right hon. Gentleman said last night that the Government had not quite decided, as I understood, what course they would take with the Bill which is now on the Paper as the first order, the Local Government (Scotland) Supplementary Bill, as to whether they would send it to a Committee or have it considered by a Committee of the whole House. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether they have now come to a conclusion on that subject, because such a decision as we desire on that point would very materially assist the progress of business. I am myself, if I may be allowed to say so, most anxious that the Bill should be read a second time; but, at the same time, if the intention of the Government is on the Committee stage to withdraw it from the consideration of the whole House, I am afraid, from what I hear, I cannot promise the Government the same facilities for obtaining the Second Reading which otherwise they could have got.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that there was a distinct Parliamentary understanding that the Second Reading of the two Bills should be taken simultaneously. That

has been the understanding from the first introduction of the Bills. I believe the view of the Government to be that Bill No. 1 should be dealt with by the Committee of the whole House, but that Bill No. 2, which consists wholly of provisions for procedure, should, in order to save the time of the House, be referred to a Grand Committee to which Scotch Members should be added. It is, however, not in the power of the Government to refer this Bill to a Grand Committee, unless the House consents to its reference. We would have to make a Motion and submit the question to the decision of the House. I claim that the Bill should be read a second time in fulfilment of the understanding arrived at. Any departure from such an understanding will strike at the root of the conduct of the business of the House, whether in the hands of one body of Gentlemen or another. I am prepared to fulfil the engagements of the Government in the conduct of the business of the House, and I claim that the same regard be had to the engagements by right hon. Gentlemen opposite.

MR. CLANCY: May I ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland if he will recommend the First Lord of the Treasury to give leave for the discussion this Session of the Motion relating to the Drapers' Company which stands in the name of the hon. Member for South Derry (Mr. Lee)?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no doubt that if the hon. Member puts any question with regard to the conduct of business to the First Lord of the Treasury, the right hon. Gentleman will answer it.

MR. CLANCY: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the question?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have been repeatedly appealed to to grant facilities for the discussion of private Members' Motions, and I am most anxious to give all the facilities in my power. But I can promise no facilities until the House has dealt with Supply.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Does the right hon. Gentleman see any objection to the granting of a Select Committee to inquire into the manner in which the London Companies are disposing of their Irish estates?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not aware of the grounds on which it is proposed o ask for a Select Committee to inquire into the manner in which the London Companies are disposing of their Irish estates.

MR. ESSLEMONT: What Estimates will be taken on Monday?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Estimates will be taken in the order in which they stand, excluding the Irish Estimates, which I have already said will not be taken then.

MR. MARJORIBANKS: Nor will the Scotch Fishery Board Vote, I presume?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: If the right hon. Gentleman wishes that Vote postponed, I do not think I can object.

COLONIZATION COMMITTEE.

Ordered, that the Select Committee on Colonization do consist of Twenty-one Members.

Ordered, that Sir James Fergusson, Sir George Baden-Powell, Mr. Osborne Morgan, and Sir Edward Grey be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

MOTION.

GENERAL POLICE AND IMPROVEMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1862) AMENDMENT.

On motion of Mr. J. Balfour, Bill to amend "The General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act, 1862," ordered to be brought in by Mr. J. B. Balfour, Sir Archibald Campbell, Mr. Craig Sellar, and Mr. Donald Crawford.

Bill presented and read first time. [Bill 252.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS BILL.

(No. 188.)

Order for Second Reading, read.

Motion made and question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen): I would have been extremely glad if the Government had given such an indication of their views in the sense desired unanimously by the Scotch hon. Members as would have dispensed with the necessity of making a single observation on the Second Reading of this Bill. When the first Bill was under the consideration of the House, I abstained from making any remark upon Bill No. 2, because I contemplated that an opportunity would be afforded in Committee of the whole

House for the Scotch Members to deal with the very important points which were contained in the measure. We were told by the First Lord of the Treasury that he had made an arrangement with a Gentleman on the opposite side of the House, and arrived at what he calls an understanding. That is only another illustration of the old adage, that understandings are the cause of misunderstandings, because very few Members on this side of the House would for a moment have waived their right to discuss the Bill on the Second Reading except with the view of its being discussed by a Committee of the whole House. The course taken last night entirely alters the situation of affairs. The debate on the first Bill, which came in like a lamb, went out like a lion. I had hoped the Government meant to dealwith the Scotch Members in an amiable spirit, that they would avoid all Party issues, and that they were prepared to frame their Bill in its detail as well as in its outline in accordance with Scotch opinion and not in accordance with English opinion. But the Irish Secretary's speech last night was an open declaration of war on the Scotch Members. The right hon. Gentleman objected to the proposal of the hon. Member for Leith (Mr. Munro Ferguson) on the ground that it would enable the majority of Scotch Members to express their opinions, and thereby put the Government in a difficulty. Under these circumstances, whatever might have been the terms of the understanding between the First Lord of the Treasury and the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks), I cannot believe that understanding contemplated or provided for the state of facts that has now arisen. The Government have told us that the moment the Bill is read a Second time they intend to withdraw it from the control of the Scotch Members.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I may remind the hon. Gentleman that it is impossible for the Government to refer the Bill to a Standing Committee without a Motion in the House. That Motion will be made after the holidays. The Government still adhere to their intention to send the Bill to a Standing Committee.

MR. HUNTER: We cannot discuss the merits of the provisions of the Bill on such a Motion. That is the difficulty in which we are placed, and it is entirely due to the wholly unnecessary and misplaced obstinacy of the Government. Why do they not tell the House frankly that, having refused the proposal to refer both Bills to a Special Committee, they will take them before the Committee of the whole House? By the course the Government have taken I am placed in a somewhat difficult position. If, as a Scotch Member, I desire to enable my constituents to know the views I hold on the Bill, the only opportunity I have is on the Second Reading. The First Lord of the Treasury said the Bill contains no principles, but deals only with machinery; but, I think, if the right hon. Gentleman had read the measure, he would not have used the language he has employed. The Bill starts by saying that the Act should be construed as an Act with the Local Government Act, 1889, and that the two Acts may be cited as the Local Government Act, 1889. There is no more fruitful source of controversy and expense in the construction of Acts of Parliament than the habit of referring an Act to a previous Act, and asking the Courts to read the two Acts as one. The difficulty arises from this circumstance, that the Acts were passed by different persons at different times. They were passed under the influence of different ideas, and the inevitable result is that there is a strong conflict between the provisions of the two Acts; and consequently a series of legal conundrums are placed before the Judges. Against this the Courts of Law are continually protesting. Now, Sir, when the Government have to deal with an Act of a previous year it is, undoubtedly, almost necessary that they should adopt the form followed in this Bill, and incorporate the provisions of the former Act. The alternative is the re-enactment of the whole of the old Act. That would be a desirable course if the time of this House were sufficient for the purpose, but we know that, with our time so limited, no Government would undertake to submit to the House a proposition which has already been embodied in an Act of Parliament. The only reason which justifies such bad draftsmanship and bad legislation is wholly wanting in the present case, because these two Bills are going to be passed in the same Session, and ought to be considered by the same body. With respect to the

Boundary Commissioners, I think before this measure passes, we ought to hear from the Government the names of the gentlemen who are to exercise the very important and difficult powers contained in it on that subject. Could anything be more inconvenient either to the Courts of Law which have to construe these Acts or to the people of Scotland who have to read them than to find that, when they imagine they have made themselves acquainted with the powers of the County Council in Bill No. 1, there is another Act which introduces entirely new powers? The powers which are provided for here with respect to the appointment of medical officers and sanitary inspectors, contain one provision which will not, I believe, give satisfaction to many people in Scotland. It is provided that,

"Except where the Board of Supervision, for reasons brought to their notice, may see fit in particular cases specially to allow, no person shall hereafter be appointed the Medical Officer of any county or district unless he be legally qualified for the practice of medicine and surgery."

Now, Sir, why should the Board of Supervision be brought in? Surely the County Council, which will have the interests of its constituents most at heart, ought to be entrusted with the power of nominating its own officers without reference to a Board in Edinburgh, more especially when the constitution of that Board has been a matter of constant complaint. There is, indeed, no body to which the people of Scotland look with less confidence than the Board of Supervision. I cannot understand what could have been in the mind of the draughtsman when, in dealing with the powers of the County Council in Bill No. 1, he relegated such important provisions to Bill No. 2 as those relating to the power of the County Council to oppose or promote Bills in Parliament. The Bill gives the County Council a limited power of opposition, but it gives it no power of initiation. I would ask how can it be alleged that these are matters of mere machinery and detail? They are matters of the very greatest importance, and of equal importance with any of those enumerated in the first Bill. In Clause 45, which deals with the Joint Committee, I find a singular omission. Assuming that the Joint Committee is called into existence, we are told that the costs of the Joint Committee shall be defrayed by the Councils by whom any of its members were appointed, in the proportion agreed to by them. But the clause makes no provision for a case which may easily occur, that is to say, where no agreement is made for the proportion of these expenses. Then, Sir, we come to a very important clause, dealing with the constitution of the District Committees. In one respect the Government deserve credit for their Scotch Bill as compared with their English Bill, because the English Bill made no provision for District Councils. But why the constitution of the District Councils should be relegated to a Bill which is said to deal only with details and machinery, I cannot conceive. There is one provision in regard to the constitution of the District Councils which is of the most obnoxious character. It is provided that two representatives of the Parochial Board in each parish shall have seats on the District Councils. Looking at the present constitution of the parochial boards, no proposition could be brought before the House which would be less calculated to obtain the support of any section of the Scotch people than this. Here, again, is a matter exciting the greatest interest throughout Scotland, and a matter of the highest importance, and we are told it is to be sent upstairs to a small Committee because the Bill deals merely with machinery and details. When I come to Clause 50, which deals with the position of the officers of the County Council, I find propositions of the greatest importance. I find one provision authorising—I am not sure that it does not compel—the County Council to pay pensions not exceeding those which may be awarded to the civil servants of Her Majesty under the like circumstances. Now, Sir, the question of giving pensions or not is one which has been frequently debated in this House, and every Member is aware that there exist the very gravest objections on economical and other grounds to the granting of pensions. The introduction of the pension system into the County Councils by this Act, is a subject in which a very large number of people in Scotland will take a very great interest, and I think the Government will have some difficulty in persuading the great majority

of the Scotch Members that those gentlemen who are employed as clerks or otherwise by the County Councils ought not, like all other people, to make provisions for sickness and old age, and that it is not the worst and most objectionable mode of paying a servant to pay him partly in salary and partly in pension. In Clause 55 I find a comparatively small matter, which would seem, however, to indicate that this Bill was drawn by Englishmen for Englishmen, and not by Scotchmen for Scotchmen. I find amongst the days put down as *dies non*, Christmas Day and Good Friday, which are not observed in Scotland as *dies non*. I am certain that considerable inconvenience may, and probably will, arise from a provision of this kind, which is so at variance with the general customs of the people. We are Presbyterian people in Scotland, and I believe the great majority of the people in Scotland would not know what Good Friday meant. The insertion of these words is, therefore, significant, as indicating that this Bill has been drafted in the same way as was the English Act, without regard to the peculiar circumstances of Scotland. On Section 59 there arises another matter on which I shall be glad to have some information. It is specially provided that nothing in the Act shall alter any rate, or affect the tenure under an ecclesiastical arrangement or jurisdiction. Now, what I wish to ask is, whether this provision is meant to apply to ecclesiastical assessments, or whether it merely relates to arrangements of ecclesiastical parishes. Of course, if it is a matter relating purely to ecclesiastical parishes, it is not a matter of importance, but I should like to know whether the expression is intended to cover and include ecclesiastical assessments. Then we come to a matter most important to this branch of the Bill, a matter which, in relation to all local government, is of the highest importance—I mean the clauses relating to borrowing powers. It has been shown by long experience that while Local Authorities strain every nerve to diminish and not increase the rates, they never exhibit the same reluctance to borrowing, and there is nothing more remarkable in he whole statistics of Local Government, in Scotland and in England, than the rapid increase of local debt. That is a subject which, I venture to think, is worthy of the most careful attention of this House in Committee. To my mind the provisions in this part of the Bill are insufficient, and yet, at the same time, excessive. They are insufficient because they limit the powers of borrowing by reference solely to the purpose or object for which the money is borrowed, not with reference to the power of the ratepayers to meet their obligations or the amount of money that has to be expended. On the one hand, I think a Local Authority cannot be left too free in respect to the objects for which they should exercise this jurisdiction; but, on the other hand, I do not think it is possible to hold Local Authorities too tightly in respect to the amount of money they are authorized to borrow on the security of the rates; and I venture to think that when this Bill goes into Committee, it will be well worthy the consideration of the Government and of Members on both sides of the House as to whether some severe limit of borrowing should not be introduced into the Bill, a limit either with reference to the ratable value of property or to that coupled with a reference to the Secretary for Scotland, because I think there is no use to which a Central Authority may always be put with greater advantage. We do not expect initiative from a Government Department; we do not expect a Government Department to be so intimately acquainted with the details of a particular locality as to form satisfactory schemes for their government; but what we do look for in a Government Department, is knowledge, impartiality, and skill. We look to a Government Department as best qualified to act as a Court of Appeal between the Local Authority and the ratepayers in many cases of doubt.

MR. W. H. SMITH rose in his place and claimed to move "That the question be now put."

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member may conclude his speech. I did not consider it my duty to interrupt him, though I must say he is taking a somewhat unusual course in going through the Bill clause by clause, because I thought he wished to show that some of the clauses are of equal importance

with those contained in the principal Bill—though they are styled "Supplementary Provisions." But I think he is exceeding the latitude usually allowed to a Second Reading debate.

MR. HUNTER: What you have indicated, Sir, was precisely the object I had in view. The point I was upon was the borrowing powers, a subject of such large scope that it cannot be considered a mere detail of the Bill; it is a question that touches the root of all sound local government and economical administration. I will conclude my observations with a reference to this point. Among the objects the Government introduce as proper for the exercise of borrowing powers is that of giving money to any persons, or body of persons, corporate or incorporate, in aid of emigration or colonization. True, it is a permissive power; it is left to the County Council to determine whether any money shall be so applied, and personally, if I were a Member of a County Council, I should be opposed to the exercise of such power. But what I wish to point out to the Government is this, that if they are going to give general powers of this character to County Councils, why not go a step further and extend the powers to purposes of education? I do not see how we are to provide for secondary education in Scotland unless through the instrumentality of Local Authorities and County Councils to be created by this Bill, and I think the Government would be well advised either to introduce an Amendment to their Bill, or accept an Amendment that may be proposed from this side, to give County Councils the power with regard to secondary education and technical education such as they allow for purposes of emigration. State-aided emigration is at present but a disputed matter of policy, but there is no question or dispute as to the expediency of assisting technical and secondary education, especially in counties. The burghs of Scotland are not inadequately provided with the means of secondary and technical education. Let us give some method by which counties may be put in an equally favourable position, giving the authorities that permissive power it is proposed to give in respect to emigration.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling): I regret very much that when I addressed a question to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury a few minutes ago I was answered in a tone which was not only severe, but almost angry. My question did not certainly deserve such a response from the right hon. Gentleman, because it was honestly intended to convey a friendly hint to the Government of the state of feeling among my colleagues who represent Scotch constituencies on this side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman must remember that although he cannot refer this Bill to a particular Committee without a special order of the House, and, therefore, such a proposal may be voted upon, he must remember also that he commands a majority in this House. We, on the other hand, cannot forget, and this adds point to our claim, that we represent an actual majority of the Scottish people and are a decided majority of the Scottish Members, and, therefore, we claim from the right hon. Gentleman more than ordinary consideration of the course we suggest as best for the improvement of these Bills. I quite admit the agreement that these Bills should be read a second time last night, and I am entirely in favour of the stage of Second Reading being granted to the Government, but since we have been considering these Bills so closely, we find more and more that the two Bills are so interwoven, not only in matters of detail, but of principle—I could name one or two cases where I find it difficult myself to deal by Amendment with the larger Bill with reference to the supplemental Bill—that we have become convinced that a great mistake has been made, in the first place, in dividing this one Bill into two parts, and, in the second place, that a fatal mistake will be made, not only in the interests of good legislation, but in the interest of the time of the House if the two Bills are to be dealt with in distinct and different manners. There is no question whatever, and I wish to impress this on the right hon. Gentleman, that time will be saved by the Government if they would do as we ask, because what will happen? Inevitably in our dealing in Committee of the whole House with the larger Bill, there will not only be a temptation, arising from some mischievous motive, but a necessity really from the best of motives on the part of Scotch Members

Mr. Speaker

and those who share our views, to introduce amendments having reference to the provisions of the smaller Bill. For we shall not, under the Government proposal, have the same power over the second Bill as over the first; it will not be subject to the same public examination by the whole body of Scotch Members. On this account I make the strongest possible appeal to the Government to make to the Scotch Members this concession and allow the two Bills to be dealt with in the same way, and I can assure them that in doing so they will facilitate the progress of business, abridge discussion, and have as the result a much better measure.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I rise at once to reply to the temperate and, I might say, friendly observations of the right hon. Gentleman. If he is under the impression that there was any heat in the answer I gave him just now, I can only express my regret if such appeared to be the case. I thought it necessary in the interests of the House to insist on the performance of engagements which are necessary, I think, to the proper conduct of business in the House. If we are unable to rely on understandings which have been arrived at, then the House itself will get into an impossible condition for the transaction of business. On that account I desired to insist on the exact performance of the engagement entered into, and in that spirit I made my reply. I fully recognize the right of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen to express their views as to the tribunal to which this particular Bill should be referred for consideration, and I have not precluded the Government from reconsidering the course we think the best; but I take the House to witness that from the very first moment we stated our view that it would conduce to the progress of business and to the proper dealing with this particular Bill if it were dealt with by a Standing Committee with Scotch Members added. That, from the first, we said we thought would be the better tribunal, and the House has, therefore, not been taken by surprise. I think it is obvious that we cannot proceed to consider Bill No. 2 until Bill No. 1 has made considerable progress in Committee. Before any step of the kind is taken I will undertake to consider the matter with my colleagues, and if it is possible by communication with Gentlemen opposite to make arrangements by which time can be saved no one will be better pleased than myself. My only object is to frame a Bill which will satisfy the people of Scotland and obtain their approval, and not in any way to affront or annoy any section in the House. I hope we shall arrive at an understanding which will satisfy the great majority of the House.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): I only desire to say I think we should be lacking in our duty did we not make manifest the very strong opinion of Scotch representatives that the tribunal for the one Bill should be the tribunal for the other. I hope, therefore, the Government will in the spirit the right hon. Gentleman has displayed defer to what I may say is the universal wish of Scotch Members, to make these Bills as satisfactory as it is possible to make them.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committeed for Monday, June 17th.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

CLASS II.

Motion made and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £35,250, be granted to Her Majesty to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the office of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works and Public Buildings.'

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): When a vote on account in respect to this item was taken some two or three months ago the First Commissioner was asked as to his intention about the admission of the public into Westminster Hall, and he stated that it was his intention again to throw the Hall open to the public. On the last occasion when we were in Committee of Supply the right hon. Gentleman surprised the House by saying that he had received a communication from the Home Office objecting to this concession, and that the exclusion of the public was still to be maintained. Now, I should like to have an understanding as to

who are the authorities having jurisdiction over Westminster Hall. I think that the Metropolitan Police have no jurisdiction over Westminster Hall, and that they are only there as the servants of the House. On the first day of each Session one of the Orders passed is that the Metropolitan Police shall keep access to the House free and facilitate the entrance and departure of Members. That is an assertion on the part of the House that it is the House that controls the Metropolitan Police, and not the Metropolitan Police who control the House. A short time ago I asked a question on the matter with a personal reference, and I only did so for the purpose of showing what I may call the ridiculous extent to which regulations are carried, that an hon. Member may introduce a stranger into the precincts of the House and under the galleries, the ordinary public may pass through St. Stephen's Porch and be conducted through the St. Stephen's Hall, the Lobbies, into the Library and on to the Terrace, but there is something so sacred about Westminster Hall that a Member is not allowed to take a member of his own family into that hallowed spot. If there is some great conspiracy in existence specially directed against Westminster Hall I do not wish for a moment to weaken the hands of the Home Office in dealing with the matter. But if there are ruffians about London with designs to injure public buildings, then St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey ought to be protected as well as Westminster Hall. But the public, under ordinary and necessary precautions, are admitted to these buildings, and in my opinion Westminster Hall is quite as safe. But if there is such a state of terror that a Member cannot be allowed to pass a member of his family through the Hall, then exclusion should be enforced under the authority of a Resolution of the House. No injury would result if the public were admitted with proper precautions and with a sufficient number of the police in charge.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, Dublin University): I have, in the first place, to make an apology to the House for an error into which I fell on a previous occasion in stating that the Home Office had agreed to a relaxation of the rule excluding visitors from Westminster Hall. I do not say it was the fault of the Home Office, but there was a misunderstanding. I spoke under the impression on my mind, and find I fell into a mistake for which I now express regret. Westminster Hall is a part of the old Palace of Westminster, and its custody is vested in the Office of Works, and especially in the Secretary—Mr. Primrose, who is my friend and most efficient assistant. I do not think if the right hon. Gentleman looks at the Sessional Order providing for free access of Members to this House, it directly affects the question of the admission of strangers to Westminster Hall. The right hon. Gentleman is in error in stating that Strangers coming through St. Stephen's Porch are admitted to the libraries and other portions of the building. What is called a "Smoking-room Order" must be obtained for that purpose.

An hon. MEMBER: For ladies?

*MR. PLUNKET: Certainly for strangers of the coarser sex, and I have myself obtained such orders. On public days the public are admitted to Westminster Hall, and then, I presume, the police make such regulations as are deemed necessary. But on other days they have not been admitted to Westminster Hall for a long time. I regret any inconvenience which may arise, not only to Members of the House, but to the public, in consequence of the regulations with regard to admission to Westminster Hall, but I must defer to the advice given by the police upon their own responsibility. It is possible that admission might be given by providing additional police. I am aware that the Home Secretary has been in communication with the police authorities on the subject, and I am sure my right hon. Friend is as anxious as I am to meet the wishes and convenience of Members so far as it is possible to do so.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I have something more to say about Westminster Hall, and the admission and presence there of the ridiculous, drunken, and disreputable-looking beasts that disfigure the place. I feel inclined to advise the public not to desire to go to the Hall for they will be shocked by what they see. On second thoughts it would be better to allow the public to visit the

Hall, for public indignation will then be aroused against the desecration of this noble old Hall the inheritance of the English race. The subject of the works in the Hall and the question why this architect should be allowed to work his wicked will there lately came before us for discussion, but it is necessary to allude to the subject again, for since the last discussion these features have broken out in the most alarming manner, most horrible night-mare creatures. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish-Bentinck), who is an authority on these matters, advised me to go and see these creatures. I did so, and, I confess, I never was more shocked in my life. I have been through some terrible scenes. I have been through the Indian mutiny, I have been in most of the art galleries of London, and I declare I have never seen anything more dreadful. I cannot conceive what induced the architect to put these things there, or the First Commissioner to allow them to be so placed. The other day I could not get an answer from the right hon. Gentleman when I questioned him about this matter, but now we know that he is responsible, and I, therefore, propose to move a small reduction in his salary. A man of the right hon. Gentleman's taste and feeling would not himself have justified the placing of these horrible creatures in Westminster Hall, but when I asked him about them, he was afraid to condemn them, knowing that he would have to face the architect. Well, I now present him with a means of getting out of the difficulty. If he accepts my motion, and consents to a slight reduction of his salary, these creatures will stand condemned by the House itself. I know very well that people who criticize the Estimates are very objectionable to Ministers, but I hope the right hon. Gentleman will give us some satisfaction. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £50.

Motion made and Question, "That Item A, Salaries, &c., be reduced by £50, part of the Salary of the First Commissioner." — (*Sir George Campbell.*)

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I think my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy has done well to bring this subject before the House. I do not myself go quite so far as he does, as I think the point at which these animals are placed is just the point where something is wanted to complete the decoration of the Hall, but I do not think that that something has been secured. These heraldic animals are hardly in keeping with the sombre dignity of the Hall.

MR. PLUNKET: The figures complained of are, as anybody can see, of exactly the same character as those which have been placed, close to St. Stephen's porch, for many years. I am not architect enough to express a confident opinion of the particular animals, but as far as my judgment goes they harmonize with other figures in this House. I should not feel myself justified in interfering with the discretion of an architect who was selected by my predecessor, and, I think, most properly selected, as the highest authority extant in this particular kind of architecture. The duty of a First Commissioner is to find the best man, and then leave him, except special circumstances should arise, to do his best. I would remind hon. Members that these decorations are not quite finished, and that the figures have an unpleasantly new appearance which will wear off in time. I am sure there has been some misapprehension, and that the figures will not be considered a disfigurement when finished.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): I beg to corroborate the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton as to the right of entrance into Westminster Hall. The point has been raised that the Hall is the remains of an ancient palace. Well, if it is let it be kept as such, but I understand that the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works has taken possession of a portion of it for the purposes of the Houses of Parliament. He is going to give some rooms leading out of the Hall on the west side to Members of this House, consequently he has upset his own theory. The police regulations in the Hall seem to me to be pushed to an absurd extreme of severity. Some weeks ago I purposed walking into the Hall with a personal friend—a stranger to the House—but was stopped by a policeman, who said that strangers were not allowed to go into the Hall. Well, I walked through Westminster Hall

myself and sent my friend round to the other entrance. We met at the top of the Hall and so went around to the Lobby of the House. If anything in the nature of outrage were contemplated it would be much easier to commit it in that part of the building, where my friend was admitted, than in Westminster Hall, which is a wide, open place—so open that everybody within it is under the eye of every policeman there. Seeing that strangers are admitted into the Lobbies and into the House without interference on Saturdays, I think strangers, accompanied by Members of Parliament, may well be permitted to walk through Westminster Hall.

MR. MATTHEWS: The observations which have fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton and the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down have been present to my mind for some time. I am in communication with the Chief Commissioner of Police to see whether some relaxation of the present rule cannot be made. Hon. Members will understand the extraordinary anxiety of the police that such a monument as Westminster Hall shall be kept perfectly safe. No doubt, as the right hon. Gentleman has said, it is impossible to draw a distinction between Westminster Hall and the other approaches to the House, but, of course, some approach is necessary. I hope some arrangement satisfactory to hon. Members may be made.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: The right hon. Gentleman has admitted that he does not exercise his own judgment, but leaves all to the architect. The great argument used to be that a thing was contrary to the Bible. We have now got over that sort of thing, and we are told that a thing is contrary to the rules of Art.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I desire to ask the First Commissioner, as I understand the building on the west front of Westminster Hall is now complete, whether the unsightly hoarding may not be taken down and the ground laid out. It would not be creditable that the place should be left as it is for another year. I would suggest that the right hon. Gentleman should submit a small Supplementary Estimate for the purpose.

MR. PLUNKET: The course suggested by the right hon. Gentleman will be taken, but I am unable to state off-hand whether it will be taken this year.

Question put and negatived.

Original question again proposed.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): Before this Vote is put to the Committee, I should be glad of the opportunity of making a few remarks on the inordinate amount of the salaries attached to this particular Department. I am glad to be able to do that in the accidental presence of the right hon. Gentlemen the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who the other night declared that the criticisms offered to the Estimates did not go to the question of economy, but altogether related to fads and crotchets. Well, I have not a fad to advance or crotchet to defend, but I am going to point out in a few sentences the enormous amount of the salaries attached to this Department. I want the First Commissioner to tell me if he can why there should be 51 clerks in this petty Department of the Government, costing a total of £13,000 a year. Speaking as a guardian of the public purse, I have no hesitation in saying that one-half of these Gentlemen would be dispensed with in a week in any well conducted private establishment. We have here a secretary at a salary of £1,200 a year; we have a private secretary to the First Commissioner—of whom I will say nothing, as I am glad the First Commissioner has all the help he needs—who costs only the modest sum of £150 a year. Then we have two principal clerks who get £1,800 a year, one clerk in charge of the accounts who gets £600 a year, three senior clerks who get £1,575 a year, five first-class clerks who get £1,903, eight second-class clerks who get £2,294, and 27 clerks of the lower division who get £3,243. What in the name of common sense does the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner want with all these people dawdling about his office? In the other branch of the Department I find that there is a gentleman called the consulting surveyor, who gets £1,100 a year, with the right to conduct his own private practice. As there are four surveyors of the first-class who receive £1,000 a year each, besides six second-class surveyors, and ten third-class, taking £11,500 a year, I do not

see what is the use of having a consulting surveyor. I would appeal to the Government, who are popularly supposed to be the defenders of extravagance—popularly supposed, but not properly, because I hold that Governments on both sides of the House are equally to blame in the matter—whether this is not an inordinate number of officials. I would put it not so much to the hardened sinners on the Treasury Bench, of whom there is little to be expected, as to Conservative Members below the Gangway, whether this consulting surveyor is really needed with this large number of official surveyors. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner to explain what these gentlemen do for the money. The only economy the Department seems to have practised has been arriving at the determination not to appoint any more clerks of the first class until the temporary draughtsmen have been promoted to be permanent, but as the temporary draughtsmen—four of them—get £983 a year, or an average of £247 each, we cannot say that the economizing faculty of the Department has been great. They have omitted to appoint one first-class draughtsman at a salary of £250 a year. The saving on this head, therefore, has been about £2 10s. a year. This is the economizing method adopted in every Government Department. They cut down the emoluments or the numbers of the worst paid officials, so that the best paid may still continue to receive the high sums they have been getting. Then there is a superintendent of furniture, a deputy ditto, three assistant superintendents of furniture, who, of course, do the work; a superintendent for the supply of coals and firewood, and another for the supply of candles and oil. Again, there is an item of £750 for the commission of the receiver, and other professional charges and expenses. I should much like to know who is the receiver and what are his duties. The total salaries amount to £47,200 a year, and I will undertake to say that a Committee of business men in this House would reduce within three months the expense by one-half. In addition to the sum I have just named, the pensions of retired officials amount to £7,400 a year. I do not wish to move the reduction of the Vote by one-half—although I think that would be the proper thing to do—but I am going to fasten on one item. I am going to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,100, the salary of the consulting surveyor. The First Commissioner need only go to the Education Department to know what a vicious system this system of consulting surveyor is. I hope hon. Gentlemen opposite will see that I am putting the matter with no more force when their side is in than when our side is in. I merely ask the Committee to consider the matter from a business point of view, and I want hon. Gentlemen to realize what it is that we are doing. I am aware that, except by way of illustration, I cannot refer to the Votes that have already been passed this Session; but I may say that for weeks past, at various intervals, we have been passing Civil Service Estimates in Class II. I have taken the trouble during the delivery of some of the less interesting speeches in this House to go over the figures, in order, just as an illustration, to point out what we are doing. I find that during the last few weeks we have passed in the shape of salaries under these Estimates, seven of about £2,500 a year, 103 of between £1,000 and £2,500, 209 of between £705 and £1,000, 237 of between £500 and £705, 679 of between £250 and £500, 923 of between £100 and £250, and 660 of less than £100. Is not the very fact that we have here what amounts to a small army—for it is an army—of private soldiers and so many officers, a proof that this Department is very much overmanned. If hon. Gentlemen will take the trouble to look through the Votes as I have done they will see that there is no Department, not even the Government Departments and the Home and Foreign Offices, which are so over-officered and manned as in this Department of the Office of Works. In conclusion, I trust that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will realize that we have been discussing this matter from the point of view which he loves so much—namely, the economical point of view. I now move the reduction of the Vote by £1,100, in order that the right hon. Gentleman may have an opportunity of defending it.

MR. PLUNKET (Dublin University) rose for the purpose of replying, when——

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford) said: I beg to move that you do now report Progress. We have been promised that the Irish Drainage Bills should be proceeded with soon after 4 o'clock. It is now half-past 4, and I think it time that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) should carry out the promise he has made with regard to those measures.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

*MR. PLUNKET: I would appeal to the hon. and learned Gentleman to allow me to reply. My office has been rather smartly attacked, but I shall not occupy more than five or six minutes.

MR. HEALY: As a matter of personal courtesy I will withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

*MR. PLUNKET: I thank the hon. and learned Gentleman for allowing me to reply to the criticisms of the hon. Member near him (Mr. Storey). I do not complain of the reference he made to me personally, but I think that the manner in which he has attacked the Office of Works constitutes an idictment almost as formidable and as eloquent as that which was hurled at Warren Hastings in a neighbouring Hall. The hon. Gentleman is entirely mistaken when he supposes that the Department of Works has nothing to do, or that all it has to do is to carry on discussions in this House in reference to the Royal Parks and Palaces and the building in which we are now assembled. When I explain to him what it is that we have to do, he will see that the Office of Works is one in which an immense amount of business is transacted. Besides the public buildings, palaces, and parks in London, we have to see to the repair and structural arrangements of all the Post Offices throughout Great Britain, as well as all the Customs and Excise buildings, and all the County Courts in Great Britain, and we have also to provide, maintain, and repair Embassy houses in every foreign capital and Consulates all over the world in great numbers, especially in China. Therefore, when he speaks of the number of surveyors, assistant surveyors, and other individual *employés*, he should remember that they have work to do in connection with buildings in Edinburgh, Bristol, Birmingham, and other large towns throughout the country and in many quarters of the globe. I think there is no Department of the Government which has been so often under the hammer of the Treasury with a view to retrenchment as the Department of Works, and when the hon. Member talks of the hardened sinners sitting on the Tory Bench, I think he ought to have applied that term to the Treasury Officials rather than to me, because of the hardened conscience with which those Officials refuse me even one scratch of a pen if it involves the smallest additional expense. I can assure him that if he looked into my office some day he would see that our *employés* are as hard worked as any set of men in the United Kingdom. With regard to what he has said as to the consulting surveyor, I would remind him that there has always been a consulting surveyor. When Sir Henry Hunt resigned that office the question of renewing the appointment was carefully considered, and the conclusion arrived at was that a considerable amount of money was saved by having a man of the very highest eminence in his profession whom we could consult on questions which frequently involve many hundreds of thousands of pounds. I am sorry that time will not permit me now to reply more fully, but if the hon. Member can put his hand on any particular instance in which a saving could be effected, as where there are too many persons employed, I shall be willing to consider his representation. But I think he would find it difficult to exceed the parsimony of the Treasury in respect of what concerns this Department.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Progress, progress!

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Might I ask that the Division should be allowed to be taken?

MR. T. M. HEALY: Ireland has not had a single day or a single hour this Session, and I trust that the Bills relating to Ireland will be at once proceeded with.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I quite admit the reasonableness of the hon. and learned Gentleman's request, but I

trust he will allow this Vote to be first taken.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 66; Noes 229.—(Div. List, No. 133.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. William Henry Smith rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Original Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Original Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 213; Noes 82.—(Div. List No. 134.)

Original Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided.

The Tellers being come to the Table, Mr. James Rowlands, one of the Tellers for the Noes, stated, that after the Doors of the No Lobby had been locked, one of them had been re-opened in order to allow three Members, who, finding themselves in the wrong Lobby, desired to cross over into the Aye Lobby; and he wished to be informed by the Chairman whether such re-opening of the Doors was in order?

Whereupon the Chairman asked whether the re-opening of the Doors had taken place before or after the Tellers had begun to tell; and on learning that the Tellers had not begun to tell, the Chairman called on the Tellers to report the numbers:—Ayes 235; Noes 61.—(Div. List No. 135.)

Motion made and question proposed, "That the Chairman do now report progress and ask leave to sit again."

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to complain in the strongest terms of the breach of faith on the part of the Government in not reporting progress at an earlier hour, on the ground, as they said at the time, that the Vote under discussion would be immediately taken. The result now will be that there will be no time to discuss the statement of the Chief Secretary with regard to Bills that are of tremendous importance to Ireland. If the Government are anxious to promote a policy of material development in Ireland, they must go about it in a different manner.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next. Committee to sit again this day.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, National Debt Bill, Naval Defence Bill, Public Libraries Act (1855) Amendment Bill.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Law as to the Endowment of the Archdeaconry of Cornwall." [Archdeaconry of Cornwall Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to suppress Indecent Advertisements." [Indecent Advertisements Bill [Lords.]

BANN DRAINAGE BILL.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have, Sir, to ask for leave to introduce the first of five Bills, four relating to the drainage of the Bann, the Barrow, the Shannon, and the Suck, and the fifth to the construction of light railways in Ireland. I am sure that nobody regrets more than the Government do the delay which has occurred this afternoon in introducing the Bills. I do not complain that the hon. and learned Gentleman has called attention to the delay; but I trust that the loss of an hour and 20 minutes will not seriously imperil the future progress of the Bills through the House. The House will perceive that the programme of last year, which embraced three Drainage Bills, has been increased by two further measures, one for the drainage of the Suck and the other for the construction of light railways.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I rise, Sir, to a point of order. The notice on the paper includes four Drainage Bills, each distinct and separate from the others, and one for the construction of light railways, which is quite distinct from the Drainage Bills; and I ask for the ruling of the Chair as to whether the right hon. Gentleman can be allowed to discuss his scheme as a whole in introducing the first of these Bills? At any rate, the Railway Bill is quite distinct from the Drainage Bills.

*MR. SPEAKER: It may be for the convenience of the House that no objection should be taken to the introduction together of the four Drainage

Bills, but certainly the Bill as to light railways is entirely distinct from the Drainage Bills, and I have already intimated that I do not think it can be included in the general statement. If an objection be taken by the hon. and learned Member it will be a reasonable one, and must hold good as against the inclusion of the last Bill.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I shall object; and I will ask the right hon. Gentleman to introduce the Light Railways Bill first, and to take the drainage Bills afterwards, instead of putting first the Bills the Irish Members do not want, and putting last the Bill they do want.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It would have been for the convenience of the House if I could have developed in one statement the whole scheme of Irish public works, as all the Bills are based on the Report of a single Commission which inquired into this subject. But the ruling of the Speaker is conclusive on the point, and as the hon. and learned Gentleman prefers that the scheme should be given piecemeal to the public, I have no alternative but to accept the decision of the Chair. The course imposed upon me will be highly inconvenient to the friends of the hon. and learned Gentleman in Ireland, and to all who desire to pass a general judgment upon the policy of the Government with regard to public works in that country. I will, however, ask whether I am precluded from dealing with the four Drainage Bills together?

*MR. SPEAKER: I think the four Drainage Bills, having relation to the same subject, may be treated as one Bill, always on the understanding that, when the separate Bills come up, hon. Gentlemen will not be precluded from discussing the differences between the Bills if they think one Bill materially differs from another.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Very well, Sir, I will confine myself to dealing with the four Bills now on the Paper, which I hope to be able to do with great brevity, as last year I not only entered at length upon the general grounds which induced the Government to begin their policy in this respect, but I also went with considerable minuteness into the details of these measures. They were printed and laid on the Table, they have been under the consideration of hon. Members opposite, and it will, therefore, be unnecessary to go into all the particulars as I did last year; I will confine myself to a few remarks on the points wherein the Bills now to be introduced differ from the measures brought forward last year. The Bills of last year differed from previous Drainage Bills in three main particulars. The first was that there was a very large free grant from the Treasury in aid of local taxation; the second was that the ratepayers inhabiting the area over which the rate had to be levied in connection with the Bills were asked whether they would accept them or not, and machinery was provided for taking popular opinion on the point; and the third was that, while all previous Drainage Bills were commenced at the instance of the landlords and were managed by them, it appeared to the Government that these should be tenants' Bills, that all the charge should be thrown on the tenants, and that all the advantage should be reaped by them. With regard to each of these three main points, there have been some slight modifications required to carry out more fully the views of the Government. With respect to the first point, we have found it necessary to increase the amount of the free grant in the case of the Shannon. I do not gather that there has been any variation in the estimate of the actual cost of the drainage works of the Shannon, but it appears that compensation will have to be paid in respect of certain piers on the lakes through which that river flows. Moreover, it has been found necessary to throw a penny on the drainage area of the Suck in connection with our Bill dealing with that river. As we cannot tax this area twice, it becomes necessary to find the money elsewhere for the Shannon; and, therefore, we have consented to give £33,000 more as a free grant with respect to the drainage carried out on that river. With regard to the second point—namely, the popular control, under which these works are to be kept in future — the Government think it would be better to introduce into the Bill provisions under which each tenant, before he votes aye or no on the expediency of accepting our proposals, will know with tolerable accuracy what is the amount of benefit which he indi-

vidually will derive and the amount of charge he will have to pay in respect of these Drainage Bills. Armed with that fuller information he may give a competent opinion whether he desired the Bills to be carried out. The Government think that by these means they have introduced a distinct improvement in the machinery of the Bills of last year for testing popular opinion in the matter. With regard to the third point, the exclusion of the landlords from the purview of the Bills, the Government have taken care to carry out more fully the intention I expressed last year by making it impossible to augment the rent on any holding in respect of improvement due to drainage works. That part of the charge which does not fall on the Exchequer will be borne by the tenant, and it would be most unfair to allow the landlords to raise the rents on the holdings on account of improvements which they do not pay for. And now in regard to this last point, I wish to say a word in reference to the Amendment put on the Paper by the hon. Member for Camborne (Mr. Conybeare). The hon. Member has embodied in his Amendment two objections to our proposals—the first is, that the drainage contemplated is essentially local; the second is, that it is principally for the benefit of the landlords. With respect to the first objection, I cannot imagine any scheme of drainage to be otherwise than local in its character; it can obviously be applied only to the area which has to be drained. Therefore, the objection is not merely against these Drainage Bills, but against all Drainage Bills. The second objection is founded upon even a greater misconception. The hon. Member states that these Bills are principally for the benefit of the landlords. Except in so far as those who own land also occupy land, these three Bills do not affect landlords in the slightest degree. As I said before the Bills are tenants' Bills and not landlords' Bills; they are entirely framed for the benefit of the occupiers, and on the occupiers alone will be thrown the responsibility of carrying them out. So much for the three Bills of last year. I do not intend to waste the time of the House by entering into them in any greater detail. And now a word about the fourth Drainage Bill which deals with the drainage of the Suck. This Bill stands in an entirely different position in some respects from the other three. We do not come to the drainage of the Suck for the first time. A very large amount of money has been already expended on the river under different Acts, and it is impossible to consider the measure on all fours with the other schemes. The case of the Suck stands thus:—In 1878 a private Bill was passed under the general provisions of the Drainage Act of 1860. The original loan provided to carry out the works was, roughly speaking, £96,000. The history of these drainage works, though not unparalleled in Ireland, has not been fortunate. It is not necessary to dwell upon the circumstances under which it has become necessary to provide a sum in excess. It is enough to inform the House that under the new Estimate, which I have every reason to believe is accurate, the works will cost £160,000 instead of £96,000, and if the money necessary to pay the accumulated interest is added, the total amount required will be £185,000. To meet that an annuity equivalent to a capital sum of £13,000 is proposed to be levied on the catchment area of the Suck. That will be about a 1d. in the £ on the valuation of the area, and that 1d. will not, as I have already stated, be increased by any contribution dealing with the general drainage of the Shannon. Then I propose to ask the tenants to pay a terminable annuity for 40 years, equivalent to the advantage they will obtain from the increased annual value of their holdings——

MR. T. M. HEALY: Assessed by the Board of Works?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Assessed, no doubt, by the Board of Works as it is under the existing Act. The augmentation in the amount of the money required to carry out the provision of that Bill will in no sense augment the charge on the tenants. On the contrary, whereas under the private Bill of 1878 the tenants were to pay the full increased value of their holdings for ever, they will now pay only an annuity for 40 years, after which they will become the absolute owners of the improvements effected by the drainage. In addition to that, the Government propose to give a free grant from the Treasury of £50,000, and the remaining charge will be thrown upon the landowners who

made themselves responsible for the Act of 1878. They will share the responsibility of maintaining the works for all time——

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the whole maintenance fall upon the landlords?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes. I may be asked why the Government think it necessary to come forward with a contribution of £50,000 from the Treasury to make up for either the misfortune or the mismanagement which made the original loan of £96,000 inadequate. The reason is that a great deal of progress has been made in the works, and that progress would be almost entirely wasted unless the works were completed. And not only so, but if the works are now abandoned, as they must be unless the Treasury comes forward and assists, there would be a great waste of money if they were ever to be resumed. It is of the greatest importance, if the drainages to be dealt with at all that we should not allow a breach of continuity in carrying on the works. I quite admit that, the works having been started by the landlords, the landlords should bear part of the loss, which presumably is due to management for which they have been responsible. In fact a great additional charge will be put on the landlords; but what the Government have insisted on is that no additional charge should be placed on the tenants. The Bill no doubt does give relief to the landlords, not however at the expense of the tenants, but at the expense of the Exchequer. I have now accurately explained the four Drainage Bills which I have laid on the Table of the House. I conclude by repeating the expression of my regret that I have not been allowed to complete my survey of the whole policy of the Government by introducing the Bill dealing with railways on the Table at the same time as the Arterial Drainage Bill, and that I am obliged to defer my statement on that subject till a future day. I beg, Sir, to ask leave to read a first time the four first Bills which stand upon the Order Book in my name.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): What is the total amount of grants from the Treasury?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It will be £330,000 excluding, and £380,000 including, the Suck drainage.

Mr. A. J. Balfour

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the improvement of the drainage of lands and for the prevention of inundations within the catchment area of Lough Neagh and the Lower Bann; and for other purposes relating thereto."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY: I do not complain of the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman has made his statement, and I think it would be unreasonable to oppose the introduction of these Bills. As to the statement in regard to the Suck, speaking of it off-hand at a first glance, and knowing something of the matter, it occurs to me that it is not altogether unsatisfactory. The Suck Board no doubt did a great deal in the past, although they have rather muddled things in recent years. They ought, therefore, to have some measure of control. But what is to be the popular control over the Board of Maintenance? The right hon. Gentleman has omitted to tell the House what measure of popular control is to be given. I understood him to say that in regard to the Suck the maintenance is still to be in the hands of the landlords, although the money will have to be paid by the tenants. The local landlords, especially the O'Conor Don, have fully recognized the necessity of giving popular control. Upon that point the right hon. Gentleman has not said a word by way of explanation, and I take it that the matter is to stand as it did last year. As far as I am concerned I shall give every opposition to a scheme which entirely divorces the people who have to pay the rates from all control in the matter, I think that the best way of dealing with the case would have been for the Government to treat it as a non-Party question, as a matter of rates and taxes. There is a fallacy propagated by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) and the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) that it is the landlord who pays the local rates. A more gross fallacy never existed, and no change can make the least alteration in the incidence of the Grand Jury cess which in the long run always falls on the tenants. The House has not been told who is to carry out the scheme. If it is the Board of Works the money is sure to be squandered, and some other and more competent Board ought to be created on which both

landlords and tenants may sit. They would get on very well together, and I am a thorough Tory in my anxiety to see the landlords properly represented on such Boards. I do not think that even the Ulster Members will pretend that the Board of Works is a satisfactory body to entrust with the administration. It may be said that there is no other, and that we have to pay for the sins of the Board of Works because the Government will not create reponsible administration in Ireland, preferring that the money shall be misspent rather than that it shall be spent by competent men under native control. I do not object to this expenditure of the public money, but I believe it to be a rotten system, and that we shall not get the value of our money. In regard to the Bann drainage scheme, you have already extracted from the people of the locality of the Bann thousands upon thousands of pounds under the foolish idea that you can carry on a system of navigation and drainage at the same time. The attempt to do so in the locality of the Bann has proved a total failure; £40,000 or £50,000 have been spent, and the only return for the expenditure on navigation has been about £40. What was the proposal which was made last year? Instead of proposing to put an end to the navigation, you proposed to keep up a system of navigation where there is nothing to navigate. Is the real work of drainage to be sacrificed for a shadowy scheme of navigation like this? The money for keeping it up is extracted from hard working tenants year after year, without their getting sixpennyworth of benefit, or having the slightest voice in the control. The Government propose now to reintroduce a Bill that will perpetuate the absurdities of this system of navigation and want of control. I think it would be much better to create a system of popular control upon which both landlords and tenants should work amicably together in getting rid of abuses. Upon Boards of this kind there is certain to be jobbery unless there is a proper system of control. What we desire is that the jobbery which has been perpetrated in the past shall be corrected by inaugurating a proper system of representation. The Bill of last year provided no proper representation, but simply a system of tenants' veto. What you do is to give them a system of veto which is not a system of control at all. In my opinion the Treasury are anxious that the Bills should be blocked; they are anxious that they should not be called upon to pay this money, and that is why this system of veto is proposed. They hope the tenants may reject the scheme the benefits of which they cannot understand. The tenants will only know that if the scheme is carried out, they will have no control over it, and they have already had great experience of the miserable way in which the Board of Works have carried out all their work. I can understand the farmers on the Bann saying, "I shall vote against this scheme, not because I do not believe in drainage, but because I object to the Board of Works having the carrying of it out." I take up the position I occupy on grounds which I consider quite intelligible. I think I should have been wanting in my duty if I took up any other position. These Bills deal with matters of vast importance to our country. Each of them will have to be considered separately and distinctly upon its merits, and it is not fair of us to allow the Government to introduce their scheme as a whole until we have had ample time to consider it in all its details, and in every branch of its details. The proposed railway system may be most excellent, but it is not at six in the afternoon with only three-quarters of an hour more left to us that we should be expecting a system of the kind to be introduced. We have not had this year sufficient time to discuss any Irish Bill, and if this is the Union, I hope it is a Union relished by hon. Gentlemen opposite. It is only reasonable that some period of the Session should be specially allocated for the discussion of Irish measures.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With the leave of the House, I should like to explain that the hon. and learned Gentlemen is under a misapprehension. In the first place, the Board of Works will not carry out any drainage scheme except in the case of the Shannon. That Board will not be responsible for the new drainage operations of the Suck or the works on the Bann and the Barrow. The Suck will be under the existing management and the other two

rivers under the Commissioners. Although the navigation of the Lower Bann is to be abandoned, the water of Lough Neagh will be kept up to the summer level, and the hon. Gentleman is under a total misconception on this point. At least three-fourths of the electors who will elect the members of the drainage boards to keep up the works on the Barrow and the Bann will be tenants, and therefore I submit that, whatever other criticisms may be passed against them, the Bills of the Government are not open to the objections raised by the hon. Gentleman.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, Mid.): As my constituents are very much interested in the Bann drainage, perhaps I may express their opinion on the subject. They have had an opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the Bill brought in last year. There was some opposition in my constituency to that Bill, but the overwhelming voice of the people affected by the drainage was so great in its favour that the opposition was withdrawn. I assure the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Monaghan that it is the unanimous feeling of the riparian tenants that the Bill brought in by the Chief Secretary last year will confer upon them an immense benefit. I understand, from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, that the navigation of the Lower Bann is to be abandoned, and that the Lake is to be kept at its summer level. I hope the House will never consent to the level of the Lake being lowered below the summer level, because that would place several very important centres of trade entirely at the mercy of the Great Northern Railway Company. Our object is that goods should be carried cheaply, and the cheapest way of carrying goods is to carry them by water. The Bill provides against floods, and at the same time that the level of the lake be maintained at such a height that the navigation which is so great at the present moment may be continued.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway): I agree that these Bills should not be made Party Bills, but considered with reference to the advantages which they will confer on the particular districts concerned. As to the Suck drainage the proposals made by the Chief Secretary are of the utmost importance, and I think on the whole most satisfactory. I must object, however, to one method in which the money is to be raised—namely, on the catchment area. The catchment area may extend to the top of high hills, and it seems to me unfair to tax people who cannot possibly be benefited by the drainage. But even with that blot on it I am inclined to accept the Suck Drainage Scheme. I know nothing about the Barrow, but as to the Shannon Bill, I have very great doubts indeed whether it will be worth the while of the people to pay the money. I do not mean to say that the proprietors near the Shannon will not get value for their money. I think they will or else they would not vote for the Bill. You propose to put £65,000 on the general catchment area, and yet the people living within it will only reap a very trifling benefit, if any. I know nothing about the Bann except what I have learned as a member of the Royal Commission, and therefore I do not wish to offer any decided opinion as to the Bann Drainage Scheme. I am quite willing to take the opinion upon the scheme of the Northern Members against my own, because I am not locally interested. I hope, however, the Chief Secretary will give us some time to consider this question, and also the cognate one of light railways.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I rise to move the Amendment which stands in my name, and I should like to say at the outset that the reason why I propose it is in order to bring into common view an aspect of this question which throughout the whole of the debates upon these Bills last year seemed curiously disregarded by every one in the House, and that is the point of view of the ratepayers of Great Britain who have to find the money for these drainage works. A good many persons in the country, and I think the Chief Secretary amongst them, are under the impression that these Bills were blocked, and thwarted, and defeated last year by the Irish Members. That was not the case. I rather take credit to myself for having been the principal agent in getting rid of these Bills last year; and whatever may have been the opinion of the House as to the method by which I did so, I received the unanimous approval of my own constituents, and of a great many other constituencies, for the

action I took to get rid of these obnoxious Bills, obnoxious from the point of view of English Members. I cannot understand, except upon matters of pure detail, why any Irish Member on either side of the House should raise a note of objection to these Bills, because these Bills propose to give large sums of English money to the people of Ireland. I would not object to this country loaning the money to Ireland, although upon that point I should join in the criticisms which have been advanced by the hon. Gentlemen on this side, who question whether, even with the alterations and additions proposed by the Chief Secretary, the Boards of Works are the best authorities to be entrusted with large public works. It is not a question whether the Irish Members have any objection to these Bills, it is whether the people who have to pay the money have any objection. The Irish people, who have been downtrodden for centuries, would be great fools if they did not take whatever sums the English people are wise enough to vote for their benefit. Now, the Chief Secretary did me the honour to refer to my Amendment, and to accuse me of labouring under two misconceptions. He said my first objection against the Bills as applying to works merely local in character was a misconception, and he added that it was a mistake on my part to suppose that these works were for the benefit of the landlord. I am not labouring under any misconception at all. I have studied these Bills as they stood last year very carefully, and I say my objections are *bonâ fide* and substantial, and are in no degree founded upon misconception. With reference to the first point, the right hon. Gentleman said these measures are measures of drainage, and drainage being local they must be local in character. He does not appreciate my point, and that is that they are local in character so far as they apply to Ireland only, and not to England. Why should my constituents be asked to pay large sums for people living in local areas in Ireland? We want money in this country. My constituents might very well come to Parliament and ask for large sums of money for the purpose of reclaiming lands in different parts of Cornwall which the landlords will not spend any money upon. I say we have no right to ask for free grants of public money, except for Imperial purposes. Then the right hon. Gentleman says it is a misconception to suppose that these Bills will tend chiefly to the benefit of the landlords. I reply that unless you fix the rents to be paid by the tenants for all time you cannot help the benefit accruing in the future principally to the landlords, and drainage, if intended for anything, is intended to relieve the riparian owners and tenants from being ruined by floods. I presume it is intended to improve the land, therefore the more you improve the land the more reason the landlords would have to raise the rents of the tenants. I do not think they would do so immediately. The right hon. Gentleman himself gives up his own argument and confirms my view, for he admitted the Bill does relieve the landlords at the expense of the Exchequer.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was then talking of the Suck.

MR. CONYBEARE: I do not care whether you were talking of the Suck, the Bann, the Barrow, or the Shannon.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. CONYBEARE: You are asking in each of these cases for English money for the purpose of relieving the landlords and tenants of Ireland—probably the landlords. According to the admission of the right hon. Gentleman relief is given at the expense of the Exchequer, and that is my contention. We are asked to pay over the money for purposes that have no international or Imperial concern. It is a sop to Cerberus, a bribe from the Government to the people of Ireland with the idea of staving off the evil day, of postponing the introduction of Home Rule, but the Government will find themselves mightily mistaken in their hope. I should not object to the money being advanced by way of loan, but I quite agree with what has been said by the hon. and learned Member for Longford, who confirms my view, that you would have an infinitely better chance of spending money beneficially and for the interest of both landlords and tenants in Ireland, if you gave the country, in the first instance, some definite representative system of local government, instead of setting up a number of little Boards here and there in different

drainage districts, giving them the power of spending money which, as they get it for nothing, will be recklessly expended. We have only to look at the memorandum prefixed to the Bill of last year to see how hundreds of thousands of pounds have been muddled away and wasted in Ireland by the Board of Works and other Authorities, and to show how dangerous it is to grant large sums of money for such purposes without the control of a strong Local Authority based upon national sentiment, and truly representative. Let the Government do the only safe and wise thing, grant a measure of local self-government, and the Irish people, through their representative authority, could raise loans without coming to England for assistance. If the Government are so ready to dispose of public money, and we are to be asked to vote away hundreds of thousands with a light heart, there are many works of an important character all over this country to which expenditure could be advantageously applied. Take one instance. About this time last year a deputation waited upon the President of the Board of Trade to ask for the expenditure of a quarter of a million sterling on Holyhead Harbour, but the right hon. Gentleman replied it was useless to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for it. When important works are needed in this country we cannot get the money. All round our coasts harbour works are needed, but we can never get public money for such purposes; but when you want to pacify Ireland, when you want to give a sop to the Irish tenants, then you give money without hesitation, and the representatives of the people look on with apathy and do not care a farthing whether they saddle their constituents with the burden or not. That is the reason why I object to the whole of these schemes, not on details but in their entirety. I am not going now into the question whether individuals, riparian owners, or tenants want the schemes or not; but this I know, that I have a letter from a tenant farmer in the Bann district, a constituent, I suppose, of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh, and he says he has held land nearly all his life, part of which is flooded at high water, but it produces an excellent grass crop, and he assures me that within an area of 32 miles affected by the floods not one man in 20 wants this Bill to pass, and he urges me to oppose it. That is not the only letter of the kind I have received. I have had communications from members of Town Councils and others in authority to the same effect. So there is by no means unanimity in the districts affected, though I do not for a moment say there may not be a preponderance of opinion in favour of the Bills; indeed, I should be astonished if this were not the case. But as a representative of British taxpayers, it is my duty to object to any expenditure on the lines laid down in the Bill. On these grounds, and not from any captious objection to details, I now move my Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out from the word 'that' to the end of the question, in order to add the words, 'inasmuch as the proposed scheme of drainage is essentially local in character, and tends principally to the benefit of the landlords owning the land in the districts affected, this House is of opinion that all such works should be undertaken by and at the expense of an Irish Local Administration.'"—(*Mr. Conybeare*).

Question proposed, "That the words to be left out stand part of the question."

MR. W. REDMOND rose.

*MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member rise to second the Motion?

MR. W. REDMOND: Not to second.

MR. BIGGAR: I second it.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I only rise for the purpose of saying I hope the Amendment will not be carried, and for the purpose also of saying that there seems to be some misunderstanding as to what took place in reference to these measures last year. I have seen it stated on various occasions that progress with the Bills last year was prevented by the opposition of the Irish Members. That is absolutely untrue, and I am sure the hon. Member for Camborne will allow that whatever check there was to the progress of the Bills came from him and not from Irish representatives.

ROYAL ASSENT.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners; the House went;—and being returned;—

MR. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to,—

1. Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1889.
2. Naval Defence Act, 1889.
3. Removal of Wrecks Act, 1877, Amendment Act, 1889.
4. Public Libraries Acts Amendment Act, 1889.
5. National Debt Act, 1889.
6. Commissioners for Oaths Act, 1889.
7. Local Government Board (Ireland) Provisional Orders Confirmation (Kilrush and Cappoquin) Act, 1889.
8. Local Government Board's Provisional Orders Confirmation Act, 1889.
9. Education Department Provisional Orders Confirmation (Acton, &c.) Act, 1889.
10. Hythe Corporation Act, 1889.
11. Sheffield Corporation Act, 1889.
12. Ballina and Killala Railway and Harbour (Abandonment) Act, 1889.
13. Cathcart District Railway Act, 1889.
14. London Hydraulic Power Act, 1889.
15. Workington Dock and Harbour (Extension of Time) Act, 1889.
16. Wood Green Local Board Act, 1889.
17. Bristol Waterworks Act, 1889.
18. Edinburgh and District Waterworks Act, 1889.
19. Caledonian Railway Act, 1889.
20. Yeadon Waterworks Act, 1889.
21. Faversham Gas Act, 1889.
22. Sun Life Assurance Society Act, 1889.
23. Weston-super-Mare Marine Lake Act, 1889.
24. Kettering Waterworks Act, 1889.
25. Metropolitan District Railway Act, 1889.
26. Deanhead Commissioners Act, 1889.

BANN DRAINAGE BILL.

It being after ten minutes to Seven of the clock, the debate on the Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," stood adjourned.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): When do the Government propose to resume the discussion?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Possibly this evening; but if not, the Bills will be set down as first orders on Monday.

OFFICIAL SECRETS [EXPENSES] (No. 97).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the expenses of the prosecution in Scotland or Ireland of a misdemeanour under any Act of the present Session to prevent the disclosure of official documents and information."

And objection being taken to further proceeding, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report progress; to sit again upon Monday, 3rd June.

MASTER AND SERVANT BILL (No. 205).

Order for consideration of Bill as Amended read.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I do not know if the Government object to my Amendment to add to the schedule these old Irish Acts which are, in my opinion, unrepealed.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I quite admit the hon. and learned Gentleman's object is desirable, but as his Amendment only appeared this morning, and I have not had time to give the subject proper examination, I do not think it is desirable to take the Bill to-day.

Consideration deferred to June 19th.

COUNTY COURT APPEALS (IRELAND BILL (No. 241).

Bill read a third time and passed.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Attention called to the fact that there were not 40 Members present. Mr. Speaker counted, and 40 Members being present,

UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVICES IN INDIA.

*Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): I rise to submit most respectfully to the judgment of this House a request for a public inquiry into the grievances of a large and meritorious body of public servants employed in India, or who have retired from the public service in that country; and I do so with a very deep sense of responsibility both to those whose cause I shall endeavour to advocate and to the House itself, for I cannot forget that it is only about a year ago that these grievances were laid before the House with an ability and an eloquence and a fulness which leave absolutely nothing to be desired. Therefore, I feel that the House may fairly and rightly ask why I should dare to reopen the sorrowful tale. Sir, I may explain in one word. I do not propose to-night to enter at length into the discussion of all those grievances of the Indian Public Service which were dealt with last year so effectively by the hon. Member for Central Hull (Mr. King). I believe all those grievances do most certainly exist; but if I can prove, beyond all reasonable doubt, a *primâ facie* case for a single one of these grievances and obtain the assent of this House to the appointment of a Committee thereupon, I feel that I shall then have attained the sole object I have in view, which is the settlement by a fair and impartial tribunal of what is really demanded by justice in this matter. And, therefore, Sir, I shall direct my remarks this evening to the elucidation of that grievance, which, in my opinion, far transcends all others, both in regard to the flagrant injustice which has been committed in respect to it, and in regard to the suffering, I may even say, in some cases, the actual starvation it has produced—I refer to the payment of furlough allowances and pensions in a greatly depreciated currency. The Uncovenanted officers of the Civil Service of India believe that they were promised at the outset of their official life, now, in many cases, 30, 35, and 40 years ago, a small provision for their old age of £200, £300, or £500, according to the length of their service, and according to the rank and the pay of their appointment. But now, when their life's work is over in that distant country and severe climate, and they come home to place their children out in the world, they are told by the India Office, "Oh, no; your pension is not £200 a year, but 2,000 rupees—the rupee has now gone down to 1s. 4½d. in value—and, therefore, you must provide for the necessities of your children and educate them for their position in life on the utterly inadequate sum of £135 per annum." Now, Sir, in regard to this terrible grievance, I have to point out to the House that the circumstances of the case have entirely changed since the debate of last year. Not, indeed, in the matter of the depreciation of the rupee and the consequent suffering of those for whom I speak—that, as we all know, has gone from bad to worse—but in regard to the facts and statements by which my hon. Friend the Member for Central Hull, and those who followed him last year, supported his case, and with regard to the counter statements by which he was answered. I am now in a position to prove undeniably, incontestably and on the highest authority, that the statements of my hon. Friend were in every respect absolutely correct, while the counter statements were incorrect and misleading — of course unintentionally misleading, I need not say. I do not for one moment impugn the good faith of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State, or of those who coached or advised him as to the reply he was to make. I have always fully admitted, nay, postulated, that my hon. Friend and the Government of India are absolutely bound in the interests of the overburdened taxpayers of India to turn a deaf ear to every appeal to their generosity or their compassion. Indeed, Sir, before they can listen, in my opinion, even to the voice of justice, they may fairly demand to be reinforced by a Vote of this House. And it is for this reason that I venture to bring before this House a statement of the grievances of the Uncovenanted servants, and to implore my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India not to turn a deaf ear, because I shall show him that these grievances are true and real. Now, I do not appeal for pity. I ask for justice only. Not, indeed, the unjust justice of the bare letter of the law when divorced from its spirit, that would rely upon the admitted laxity of some of the earlier contracts

of the Government of India with its Uncovenanted civilians, so as to twist that laxity to the detriment of these unfortunate officers. That kind of justice, I venture to say, has been far too popular with the Departmental Committees, and I do express an earnest hope that my hon. Friend and the Government of this country will not oppose to the appeal I shall make to them to-night any reference to Departmental Committees or to decisions of the India Office *ex parte* and without a public inquiry into the facts of the case. Sir, I ask only for the justice of a fair and honourable common-sense interpretation, such as this House always affords, of the wording of the contracts that I shall quote here to-night. And I ask the House also to take into consideration the situation of the parties to whom I am about to refer. This is the justice which the Indian taxpayer himself desires to see rendered to these Uncovenanted civil servants, and this is the first point I will notice in which the circumstances have altered since last year. I shall be able to quote the very words of a native gentleman who will tell this House that my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India—I am sure unconsciously—last year libelled the noble character of the Indian peoples when he represented them as grudging these Uncovenanted servants their just rights in matters of pension. Sir, while not a single native witness before the Public Service Commission said one word against the claims of the Uncovenanted Europeans, two of those witnesses distinctly, and in terms, supported these claims. One said he did so "because they leave their homes to come out to this country, and so deserve consideration." Another native witness, with an honourable candour that, I think, does him all credit, said—

"Uncovenanted servants, who draw their pensions in England, should have the advantage of the more favourable rate enjoyed by covenanted servants."

Now, Sir, I cannot doubt that, in consequence of this testimony, and in consequence of other testimony that would have been forthcoming, the Public Service Commission would have reported most strongly in favour of redressing these grievances, if only the Government of India had not distinctly, and in the most peremptory language, withdrawn all consideration of the Uncovenanted case from them. I have been told that my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India has alleged the sitting of the Public Service Commission as one of the reasons why this inquiry for which I ask should not be granted. Will the House believe that the Commissioners, in their Report, have used these very words that the Government have expressly forbidden them—

"To discuss the general question of the present pension conditions of the Uncovenanted Service, as such, or any grievances of that service as at present constituted?"

Now, I do venture to protest most warmly against this policy of secrecy, this policy of refusing even to discuss a burning question of such vital importance to such a large number of our fellow subjects. That policy is not approved by the natives of India, and I cannot conceive that it can possibly be approved by Her Majesty's Government. The weighty words of the Prime Minister, speaking only yesterday on another matter of kindred interest, are still ringing in the ears of some of us. Lord Salisbury said that he invited discussion and courted inquiry, and deprecated bitterness of feeling in the discussion of the matter under notice, and he added—

"I feel that we should be only aggravating those feelings, if, by such influence as we possess over the Legislature of this country, we were to give the victory to one side or to the other."

I regard those words as words of the highest and truest statesmanship, and I appeal to my hon. Friend the Under Secretary for India to apply them to the case of the Uncovenanted civil servants. The Financial Department of the Government of India takes one side on this question; the Uncovenanted officers of the Government, and I venture to say all the rest of India, native and European, take the other side. All we ask for is an inquiry as to whether the Financial Department of the Indian Government or all the rest of India is right, and I do ask Her Majesty's Government not to give the victory to one side by stifling inquiry. Now, Sir, I think I have said enough to show that native opinion in India would strongly support this House in granting an inquiry; but if further proof be wanting, I think it will be supplied by the hon. Member, who will no doubt follow me

in this discussion. We all know that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) is authorized—if I may venture to use the word—to speak for a very important section of the native taxpayers—I mean those who are educated in the use of the English language. I call that section an important one, not indeed in point of numbers, but because it is the one section that can and will make itself heard both in India and this country. I shall be very much surprised if the hon. Member for Northampton does not on their behalf tell the House this evening that the Indian people are not so ungenerous or so pettifogging as to desire to look into the contracts of their Uncovenanted European servants in order to detect some trumpery little legal flaw by which they can escape the payment to these men of what they have justly earned. Further, I think that the hon. Member will say that the Indian people are not so short-sighted as to be content to have a discontented Civil Service, and therefore a Civil Service that may become corrupt and inefficient—and all for such a trumpery saving as the Indian Office contends for in this case. The Government has usually, and I think most rightly, declined to make any difference whatever in the treatment accorded to European and Indian officers respectively, when those officers have precisely the same duties and the same responsibilities. Whenever Government has deviated from this golden rule, it has, in my opinion, gone wrong. But, Sir, the present pension system of India, against which I am protesting, does make an enormous difference between the non-domiciled and the domiciled Uncovenanted officers—a difference which both Europeans and natives in India are most anxious to see swept away. Take the case of two officers of the same pay and rank, each retiring, let us say, on a pension of 2,000 rupees a year, one, a native, to his home in India, and the other, an Englishman, to his home here. Now, Sir, it is universally admitted and known as a fact that the value of the rupee has not fallen in India itself, and therefore, the domiciled officer receives his full £200 per annum, as his predecessor received it 20, 30, or 40 years ago, whereas his European brother can only draw a miserable £130 a year. ["Hear, hear."] Before I leave the consideration of this question from the point of view of the native taxpayer, let me say just one word as to what would be the cost of levelling up the pensions of the European uncovenanted civil servants so as to place them in the same position as that which is enjoyed by their Indian brothers. Sir, if the very utmost of the demands that have been put forward were approved by the Select Committee for which I ask and conceded by the Government and every rupee pension in existence were to be at once paid at the rate of 2s. for the rupee, the total cost to the Revenues of India would be a little over £35,000. Well, Sir, that, I maintain, is but a small fraction of the sum that is annually frittered away in the Simla pic-nic and other fal-lals of the Government of India. I venture to say that if this were a question of some fad of a Viceroy or a Secretary of State, an expenditure of £35,000 would not stand in the way for a moment. But I go further, and say that even this comparatively small expenditure on an act of tardy justice would be, in the nature of things, a diminishing and ultiminately a vanishing quantity. For the declared policy of the Government of India is, and rightly so, more and more every year to substitute native agency for European in these scientific, technical, and literary appointments. That policy will every year receive greater and greater development as more and more Indian gentlemen become fitted by their education and experience to take up these appointments. Though for a few years, undoubtedly, the sum I have named may be exceeded somewhat as more pensions fall in, it is absolutely certain that before long it will diminish and absolutely vanish altogether. I have proceeded so far on the assumption that those for whom I speak to-night are to gain everything for which we ask. I am, however, ready to admit that if this inquiry be granted, as I believe it will be, by the just and honest feeling of this House, it is quite possible that there may be discovered some *via media*, that some compromise may be devised, which will cause even a much less expenditure of the Indian Revenues than the comparatively small sum I have named. I will give the reason for my belief. In Ceylon, what has been the result of an inquiry such as that for which I am asking, which has been most honour-

ably to the Government of Ceylon and to the Colonial Office spontaneously undertaken in the interests of the officers of Ceylon and of the taxpayers of that island? Well, Sir, that inquiry was set on foot as long ago as 1872, when it was seen that there would be an inevitable divergence between the promises of the Government in sterling and their performances in rupees, and an arrangement has been come to which, on the face of it, is perfectly just and equitable, which, I understand, is perfectly satisfactory to all the officers in the service, and in regard to which I am assured by my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies that no complaint whatever has ever been made by any one of the taxpayers of Ceylon, and which, if adopted in India, would certainly cost very much less than even the £35,000 which I have ventured to suggest as the maximum charge in regard to the Uncovenanted servants in India. The Ceylon system is thus described in the words of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies—

"Officers who entered the Ceylon Civil Service before 1872 are entitled to draw their pensions in England at 2s. the rupee, except those who in 1878 were granted an increase in their salary of 20 per cent, and these draw them at 1s. 10½d. the rupee. All officers who have entered since the 1st of January, 1872, will be entitled to draw their pensions at 1s. 10½d. the rupee, which was the rate then fixed for payment in this country of half salary of officers on leave, and pensions of retired officers."

Now, Sir, that arrangement was based on the conditions in force at the time the contract was made, and I think the House will regard it as a fair and equitable arrangement. Its acceptance, in the spirit in which it has been accepted, does the highest credit to the Colonial Office, to the Government of Ceylon, and to the people, and the Civil Service of that island. I turn now to another point. The most important change that has occurred in reference to this question since last year's debates is due to the fact that the Currency Commission has reported. I shall take as my text for what further remarks I shall offer to the House to-night—and I maintain it is a full justification for the bringing forward of this subject—an authoritative statement signed by the whole of the Currency Commission—that is to say, by such undeniable authorities as Lord Herschell, as my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), as the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees in this House (Mr. Courtney), as the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir J. Lubbock), and others. This is what these Gentlemen—the first ecomonic authorities of the day—say in paragraph 112 of the first part, which is the unanimous part, of their Report—

"Another interest to which our attention has been directed is that of the European *employés* of the Government of India. They receive salaries paid in silver . . . . So far as their incomes are spent in India or are devoted to the purchase of commodities, the gold price of which has fallen as much as that of silver, they do not sustain any loss. But on a large proportion of their remittances to Europe they derive no benefit from the fall of gold prices, as the fall has affected wholesale more than retail prices, and has not affected at all many of the prices in which they are interested."

It would be very difficult, indeed, to wrap up in so few words so many absolutely undeniable confirmations of our arguments and so many utter refutations of our opponents' replies. This brief paragraph proves in the opinion of these high authorities—first, that the hardship of which I complain to-night is an undoubted and a very real and tangible one; secondly, that it is utterly false to pretend that those Members of the Civil Service who are domiciled in India suffer from the same hardships, or would demand the same redress, or that silver salaries generally would have to be revised in consequence of any action in the direction I suggest; and thirdly, the Currency Commission paragraph states that it is utterly fallacious to pretend that the fall in the value of the rupee is counterbalanced by any fall in many commodities such as house rent, education, and domestic service, for which these pensions have to pay. Well, Sir, these are three statements of the Currency Commission vouched for by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen, whose names I have given to the House, all of them great economic authorities, and I say that these statements go a very long way, indeed, towards proving the whole of our case. Now, Sir, who are the uncovenanted officers for whom I plead to-night? I know that a great deal of ignorance prevails very generally as to the status and as to the conditions of their service. Most of the Members of this House

probably are well aware who are the Covenanted civil servants of India. They are gentlemen who, chosen by a high literary competitive examination in London, go out to India to be Collectors, Commissioners, and Chief Commissioners, or Lieutenant-Governors in one line of the service known as the Executive, or as Magistrates, Judges, and High Court Judges on the other line known as the Judicial Service. Sir, I wish at once to say that in our opinion this branch of the Indian Civil Service, from which must be chosen the heads of many of the Local Governments is, and must necessarily be, a *corps d'elite.* Its rights and privileges are guaranteed by Act of Parliament, and even its pensions are settled by Statute, and nothing that we could ask for or even suggest for the Uncovenanted would, in the slightest degree, touch the admitted hegemony of that service, or leave them anything but at least twice as well off as any other Department of the State in India. Outside this highly privileged service everything else is technically Uncovenanted, from the Viceroy down to the lowest office sweeper, in India. But from this large body must of course be deducted, for the purpose of the complaint which I make to-night, as to the payment of pensions in the depreciated currency, all except an almost inappreciable fraction of less than 5 per cent. At least 95 per cent of the Uncovenanted are domiciled civil servants, and that class, from the highest to the lowest, spend their pensions in India, and consequently, as the House knows from the Report of the Currency Commission, they obtain for their pensions full value, because the rupee in India has not fallen in its purchasing power. Even of the remaining 5 per cent of the Uncovenanted officers, all those who could make their voice heard at all have long ago been emancipated from this hardship of which I complain to-night. Many years ago—in in 1826, the High Court Judges and the Bishops got themselves valued in sterling by an Act of Parliament. So with regard to the Viceroy and Uncovenanted Members of Council. And only so late as 1867, as a recent question elicited from the hon. Member the Under Secretary of State for India, some minor legal luminaries not unknown to the Secretariats at Simla, got themselves admitted into the ranks of the elect, and also got themselves valued in sterling. Well, then, who remain? Who alone of the hundreds and thousands of Indian servants of the Crown, who alone have been condemned to suffer, not from any fault of their own, but from the vagaries of the silver market in Europe? To whom alone is the absurd proposition held out by the Government that they should never be able to say from one year to another what their pension really is? The £200 of a few years ago has now sunk to the starvation allowance of £135 a year, and in a very few years that £135 may have sunk to £50 a year. I say that is a thing which is not fair, and that this House should not suffer it to go on. The residuum—the unfortunate and unhappy residuum—of whom I am speaking, number about 1,500 officers; and for the purposes of comparison, I may mention the fact that the Covenanted servants in India number about 950 members. The men for whom I appeal number as I say 1,500, and belong almost entirely to the scientific or technical department of the public service. There are 18 Departments of which I speak, and with the permission of the House I will read out the number of officers in each Department, so that there may be no doubt whatever as to the persons for whom I am pleading, or as to the extent of the complaint which I make. There is the Financial Department, with 19 officers; the Archæological Survey, with 15; the Customs Department, 3; the Education Department, 99; the Forest Department, 129; the Geological Survey, 13; the Gaol Department, 29; the Meteorological Survey Department, 6; the Mint, 11; the Opium Department, 50; the Postal Department, 13; the Police Department, 254; the Public Works Department, 773; the Registration, 2; Salt, 22; Survey, 10; the Revenue Survey, 58; and the Telegraph Department, 95. To these might possibly be added 35 officers who, though belonging to a service that is essentially a domiciled service — the subordinates executive and judicial service—still happen to be non-domiciled Europeans. I do not think that these 35 gentlemen could claim anything of right in this matter, because having elected to join a distinctly domiciled service, they must of course ac-

cept the rules suitable for domiciled officers. While I am on this point I should like to make one or two remarks with reference to the Amendment which I see on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), who speaks with the greatest authority on this subject. The hon. Member has put down an Amendment, the purport of which is to exclude from any advantages that may accrue to Uncovenanted officers from the appointment of a Committee such as I suggest all those gentlemen who are appointed in India That is the purport of the Amendment. Well, Sir, I am free to confess that I think there is very much, no doubt, to be said for that view. In principle I admit that I agree with it, but I must say that I think it would be an ungracious and almost a cruel thing to exclude those who, at any rate, have already been appointed in India in the way objected to by the hon. Gentleman. But I would venture strongly to urge on the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy that this is really a very small point, and that there is really no disagreement between us. Especially would I point out to him that the point on which he lays so much stress is exactly one of those points which would naturally be examined by the Select Committee for which I am asking, and that therefore my hon. Friend opposite will fully attain his object by voting for the Resolution which I shall presently have the honour of moving. Well, Sir, it will be seen that of those officers for whom I plead, and the names of whose Departments I have just read out to the House, and who have been left absolutely the only sufferers by the fall in silver with regard to pensions, considerably more than one-half belong to the great Department of the Public Works. These include hundreds of highly-skilled engineers and other scientific officers of that Department, of whom Sir Guilford Molesworth is the distinguished head. They include also the electrical engineers and the electricians of the Telegraph Department, headed by those distinguished officers, Sir Albert Cappel and Mr. Pitman, who has recently received from Her Majesty the Order of the Indian Empire. This class is by far the most numerous and most important of those for whom I speak, and I shall presently show the House, by quoting the *ipsissima verba* of the contracts under which they entered the services, that the treatment to which they have been subjected, and the refusal to do them justice, is indeed peculiarly scandalous. But, Sir, in my humble opinion, not less scandalous is the treatment that has been accorded to the 99 officers of the Education Department, comprising the Inspectors of Schools and the Professors of the State Colleges throughout India. Sir, so long ago as December 8th, 1862, the Secretary of State for India wrote a despatch about the pensions of those gentlemen, and in it he used these words:—

"I think there is, however, sufficient ground for an exception as regards educational officers and law officers. . . . In those cases a previous course of study, and in many instances practical experience is required, and there is consequently reason for making a distinction in regard to that class of servants, whose claims will, therefore, be separately considered."

Will the House believe that during the 27 years which have elapsed since the sending of that despatch, not one move has been made to deal with that question, which was thus solemnly promised to be dealt with? I will go further, and say that the complaint of these gentlemen is that their claims have not even been considered. I have recently elicited from my hon. Friend the Under Secretary for India the fact that the Uncovenanted law officers, those who in 1862 were bracketed by the Secretary of State with the Uncovenanted education officers, did so long ago as 1867, obtain separate treatment, and they obtained a scale of sterling pensions, which I will ask the House very carefully to compare with those of the education officers. My hon. Friend stated on Tuesday last that these law officers got £300 per annum invalid pension after 6¾ years, £500 per annum after 8¾ years, and £750 per annum retiring pension, whether ill or not, after 11½ years. Now, Sir, the education officers, if they are worn out and invalided under 15 years' service, get no pension at all; they only get a gratuity. The Law Uncovenanted officers, remember, get their full pension after 11½ years' service, while the education officers up to 15 years get nothing at all but a gratuity. From 15 years to 22 or 25 years an invalid pension is granted them if they are utterly worn out—and that is actually subject to a maximum of 2,000

rupees, or £135 a year, unless their pay has been exceptionally high, and then there is a maximum of 3,000 rupees, or £200 a year. After 22 or 25 years, an invalid pension subject again to maxima of £200 or £350 a year. No pension at all can be obtained except as an invalid pension, *i.e.*, unless a man is certified to be utterly broken down, until after something like 30 years' service in India. This, again, is subject to maxima of £200 and £350. My hon. Friend, Sir, justified last Tuesday the very handsome scale of £750 for 11 years' service, which is granted to the Uncovenanted law officers, and I think he very properly justified it, in the circumstances, on these grounds—my hon. Friend said:—

"Officials requiring professional qualifications who are recruited from the legal profession at an advanced age, are, in most Departments of the Government, granted special terms on grounds which are generally well understood."

Why, Sir, that is exactly why I demand for these educational officers of whom I am speaking, not exactly the handsome terms properly granted by my hon. Friend to the Uncovenanted law officers, but at least something less mean and pitiful than the cruel terms that I read out just now to the House, cruel terms which give a man a maximum of £135 a year for such a long service as is required in these cases. Let me offer to the House one or two cases within my own personal knowledge wherein every condition that was stated by my hon. Friend to justify such good terms is amply fulfilled in the case of the educational officers. About the year 1866 there was an urgent need for a Professor of Mathematics of the highest powers in the State University of Calcutta, and the Government were fortunate enough to obtain for that post the invaluable services of Professor C. B. Clarke, Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge. Mr. Clarke happened to be a barrister, so he might possibly have obtained one of the legal offices. He was a man of 33 years of age, and could, therefore, hardly be called a boy. Ten years before, Mr. Clarke had taken the honourable degree of 3rd Wrangler—in the year preceding the one in which my hon. Friend himself took the same distinguished academical position, and I know there is more than one hon. Member in this House can bear witness that as a resident Fellow at Cambridge during 10 years, Mr. Clarke won a very high reputation. He rose in about 21 years' service under the sun of India to be Chief Inspector of Schools in Bengal, and head of the Educational Department in Assam, charged with the educational administration of a vast area of country. When he retired it was on account of superannuation, and, therefore, I fancy he got a superannuation pension, which was, I think, £350 per annum. But if he had been a somewhat younger man, and had it depended upon his actual services, the pension to which he would have been entitled for his service of 21 years would have been the pitiful pension of less than £200 per annum. Well, Sir, that is less than one-half of the amount he would have got after 8⅔ years' service in the Uncovenanted Legal Department. I can assure you, Sir, that Professor Clarke's case is absolutely typical of the whole of his Department. Professor Croft (now Sir Alfred Croft), the Director of Public Instruction in Bengal, having been a scholar in my own College (Exeter) at Oxford, and a graduate in double honours, had undoubtedly acquired those professional qualifications of which my hon. Friend speaks as lecturer of Trinity College. Professor Tawney had been senior classic at Cambridge and Fellow of Trinity College, and everybody knows the value of these academical distinctions. Sir Alexander Grant, who returned to this country to be principal of Edinburgh University, and whose suberb edition of the Ethics will be known to many Members; Sir Edwin Arnold, the "Light of Asia," and many other distinguished men have adorned the Educational Department. In the year 1872 it was shown that out of 38 educational officers in Bengal, no less than 20 had obtained in their earlier years academical honours of the first class, or equivalent academical rank. Well, Sir, these are the gentlemen of whom my hon. Friend said last year that they had chosen the "wider and easier gate of the Uncovenanted Service to the narrower and most difficult entrance by the Covenanted Service." Sir, there is not a University man in this House, I am sure—even including such a distinguished University man as my hon. Friend himself—who will not

admit, and who does not perfectly well know, that that sneer was not properly applied to the Educational Service in India. I am not sure that it is not out of place with regard to the Cooper's Hill men of the Public Works, Telegraph, and Forest Departments, for although their training has had less of a literary character and been more entirely scientific and technical, it is clearly out of the power of anyone to say which is the easier and which the more difficult gate. I venture to say it is hardly to be wondered at if the sneer of my hon. Friend, however unintentional, no doubt and uttered in good faith, has caused a great deal of pain throughout India. Well, Sir, much has been made of the fact by the Government that out of the £1,000 pension obtained by all Covenanted officers, something like £500 has been derived from deductions made from their salaries. As a fact, Sir, it has been proved by actuarial computation that on the average, of the greater number of retired Covenanted civilians (the average pension being taken at the rank of Commissioner), the amount so contributed by deductions of pay varies between £300 and £400. But let that pass, Sir. Surely all pension is nothing more than deferred pay, both for Covenanted and Uncovenanted officers. If they had no pension we all know that they would have to get higher salaries while in the service, so that, though the deduction is only nominally made in one case, it is really and practically made in both, and as the Covenanted salaries are far higher than the Uncovenanted, the whole argument falls to the ground. And even if it did not fall to the ground—if it would hold water, what, after all, does it amount to? It amounts to simply this, that every Covenanted officer, no matter what his rank, no matter what the period of his service, provided he has resided twenty-one years in India, obtains a pension of £500 as a matter of course, and that pension would be the utmost limit and an exceptional possibility only for the Uncovenanted man, even if the very utmost of our demands were at once conceded! And let me air another point. I have said, and it will be universally admitted, that a pension is really deferred pay. Well, Sir, the pay of these professors, inspectors of schools, and engineers of whom I have spoken, has been kept back and deducted by the Government in rupees when those rupees were each worth 2s. and sometimes 2s. 3d. or 2s. 4d. What, then, is the character of the proceeding by which the Government now undertakes to return those rupees—which it has had in its pocket for so long—and to tender them at the value of 1s. 4½d.? But, perhaps, after all, the Government will hark back to the old, old story, and treat us to the argument that is universally known in India as the "Shylock" argument. Perhaps the Government will say, "You made the bargain with your eyes open, and you must stick to it." Sir, I am not at all sure that the bargain was really made at all in the sense insisted upon by the Government, and I shall prove, Sir, in a few words that it was not made by these men knowingly and with their eyes open. I can shew in a moment that even the bargain itself is a very doubtful one. I venture to think that its validity would long ago have been tried in the Courts of Law if it had not been for the obvious fact that it is almost hopeless for a poor and worn-out officer to fight a rich and powerful Government in the Courts of Law. When on rare occasions the Government have found an officer who obviously intended to go to law, I can show that, on these occasions, they have acted on the motto *Divide et impera*, and bought off the Tartar by giving him a handsome bonus. I shall not deny for one moment, Sir, that somewhere about the year 1862, as stated last year by my hon. Friend, the Government did put into some—possibly into all—of its subsequent agreements with Uncovenanted officers an unassuming little clause to the effect that payments in England would be made at the official fixed rates of exchange. But, Sir, in the same breath my hon. Friend admitted last year that at the time when that clause was introduced in these covenants, and for years afterwards, a pound sterling and ten rupees were convertible terms. Indeed, in 1862, it seemed quite possible that the rupee might become appreciated in consequence of the great gold production of Australia. At any rate, I assert that to no one in his senses, in the year 1862, could it have occurred that such wide-spread ruin and desolation would be possible as has been inflicted on the

Uncovenanted officers of India under the pretence of this unassuming little clause, and, therefore, I do maintain that no one would ever have thought of objecting to it, even if it had been brought more prominently under notice than it was. Sir, I do not believe that the Government of the day in 1862, or anybody else meant by this clause to produce the result that is now sought from its action. It was simply for the convenience of Indian accounts, which must, of course, be kept in rupees. The pensions of Europeans, it is understood, are spent in Europe, and even when 2,000 rupees are mentioned, surely they meant £200. My hon. Friend admits that £200 and 2,000 rupees were then convertible terms. The pensioner could not spend 2,000 rupees in London; the shopkeepers would not take them; he spends his £200—that is what is meant. Surely, now, the Government, in fixing the pension or deferred pay of one of these servants, looks first to the nature and the value of his services to the State, and looks secondly to the actual needs of the man, and to the rank of life to which he may belong. And surely, Sir, it is as obvious as the sun under heaven that a fixed sum was contemplated at the time the contract was made. It is absurd to say that it should be a fluctuating sum—that twenty years ago it was to be £200, that now it is to be £130, and that 20 years' hence it may be reduced to £50, £40, or £30, and the recipient driven to beggary. There are those who tell us that £135 a year at the present moment will purchase as much as £200 did 20 years ago. This, if true, would be a very fair argument, though surely it would be a very hard-hearted argument even at best. But, Sir, it is not true. The Report of the Currency Commissioners shews, and I think every hon. Member will acknowledge, that such items as the education of children at school, such items as domestic service, and in many instances house rents—items which, let me inform the House, must take from the pensions of these men a very large share of that miserable £135 that my hon. Friend would give them—are at the present moment not lower, but in many cases higher, than they were 20 or 30 years ago. And even if it were true that £135 would buy what £200 would purchase 20 or 30 years ago, why is it that this little band of Uncovenanted servants should be the only persons in the whole world for this hard measure to be meted out to them? Surely, if the theory were true, all public salaries fixed 20 years or more ago would, in all justice, be reduced to two-thirds of their present amount. Surely, what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, and let those who use this argument first renounce one-third of their own salaries. But how about the officers who were appointed before this little clause, this unassuming, creeping little clause—on which I fear my hon. Friend depends—was introduced into the covenant? In the covenants of these officers, members of the Telegraph Services, and others, there commonly appeared this clause, to which I ask the careful attention of the House:—

"In all payments to be made under these presents the pound sterling shall be considered equal to, and calculated after, the rate of 10 rupees."

Now, surely that seems plain enough to the ordinary English intellect. Surely, you would think that, under that covenanted condition, the officer would at any rate get his pound sterling for his 10 rupees' pension after his life's work was over in India, and he came over here sadly wanting every penny of the money. Not a bit of it! Now, I ask the House to listen to the way in which my hon. Friend can explain away even such a plain statement as that of this covenant. Asked about Mr. Gordon, who was one of the officers of the Telegraph Department, and who holds this very covenant at the present moment, my hon. Friend said:—

"Mr. Gordon drew his furlough allowances at the rate of 2s. to the rupee, because in his covenant dated 1867"—

I think it should be 1857—

"it was provided that 'in all payments to be made under these presents the pound sterling shall be considered equal to, and calculated after, the rates of 10 rupees. Mr. Gordon and other retired officers in the same position"—

This is what my hon. Friend says—

"do not draw their pensions at 2s. to the rupee, because at the time when their covenants were made these officers were not permitted to receive pensions in England, and, therefore, the covenant did not apply to pensions. When permission was subsequently given for the payment of the pensions in England, it was granted on the express condition that it should only be paid at the varying rate of exchange."

Now, Sir, I will ask, does the House consider that to be an adequate reason for depriving these officers of what little advantage they would gain by getting this £200 instead of this £135. I do not know what is meant by my hon. Friend when he says that these officers "were not permitted" to draw their pensions in England before the year 1862. What I do know, Sir—for the hon. Gentleman has himself admitted it—is that there have been Uncovenanted pensions payable in England, and drawn in England, and payable in sterling, too, paid at the rate of 10 rupees to the £1, ever since the year 1815. And, Sir, what is even more significant with regard to this point is that the rate of payment during all these years from 1815 to 1862 was always at a rate of 2s. to the rupee, even when the commercial rate was 2s. 2d., 2s. 3d., and 2s. 4d., showing that 2s. to the rupee was considered a fair and proper official rate. It was fixed by the Statute of 53, Geo. III., c. 155, as the rate which should be ordinarily recognized in official transactions. And these Uncovenanted officers of whom I am speaking loyally and honourably submitted, to their own disadvantage, as for instance, when the rupee was 2s. 4d., they took their rupees at 2s. But, Sir, the Government absolutely refuse to submit to this rate, now that the commercial rate has gone down to 1s. 4½d. Sir, the Government says that these "payments of pensions were not permitted to be made in England." Well, Sir, I hold in my hand the covenant of Mr. Gordon, or a copy of it, to which I have referred, and I find in this covenant it is stated that pensions are to be paid as promised. It was signed on the 9th May, 1857, long before the clause permitting pensions to be drawn in England, and I find that the pensions were to be paid on the basis promised. I find also it is stated that the payments are to be made at £1 sterling to the 10 rupees. Well, now I ask the Government this—where were the payments to be made in sterling at this rate, if not in England? He was promised a pension. He is an Englishman; where was he likely to take his pension? Mr. Gordon! The name speaks for itself! Was he likely to hang about the slums of Calcutta and take his pension? Where was he to take his pension, promised at 10 rupees to the £ sterling?

SIR J. GORST: In India.

*SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE: The Government ought to give it to him at home—or, at any rate, this House will think the Government are not dealing fairly with him if they do not. My hon. Friend says in India. Why, the pound sterling is not current in India. If you tendered a pound sterling in India they would not take it. There is not one word in Mr. Gordon's covenant which speaks of a rupee pension at all. Frankly, I should be very much grieved to see the Government of this great country "run in" by one of their own officers for breach of contract; but for the life of me I cannot see why any of the gentlemen holding these contracts have not attempted it. Perhaps the explanation may be found in a somewhat unexpected way. Sir, I hold in my hand the official statement of the terms under which certain educational officers were engaged under the Government of India. And I read this passage from it:—"No pension in any case to exceed the sum of £500 per annum." Not one word about rupees from beginning to end. Now, Sir, in 1887, only two years ago—I hope I may call my hon. Friend's attention to this point, because I dare say he will remember the circumstances—in 1887, two years ago, one of the educational officers engaged under the terms of this document, came to take his pension, and of course he was told "you can only get 5,000 rupees," and if he were permitted this year to take his pension in England that would be only £350 per annum. Well, Sir, this particular officer, whose name I am permitted to furnish to the hon. Gentleman if he desires it, did not see altogether this way of doing business, especially as he found this telling note added to the prospectus by which he had been enticed into the Educational Service:—

"N.B.—These pension rules were first issued in 1831, and there is every prospect of their being revised shortly in still more liberal terms."

Well, Sir, this gentleman when he was told that the £500 had diminished to £350, did not quite see it. He expostulated with the India Office rather strongly, and he did more than expostulate; he

went into the City and he consulted a very eminent lawyer. Well, Sir, the Government heroically stuck to their determination that he was to get his 5,000 rupees, or £350, and not his £500. But, Sir, this is a remarkable fact. It was discovered that the extrordinary and admirable services of this gentleman absolutely constrained the Government to give him a bonus of £1,500 in golden sovereigns down, there and then! That fact speaks for itself, and I congratulate the gentleman on getting the money; I am glad of it. I have no doubt he has paid his lawyer's bill, and that he will live happy ever afterwards. I have mentioned the fact that the Statute 83 Geo. III., c. 155, fixed 2s. as the statutory rate of the rupee. In 1831, as has been noticed in that prospectus I read just now, the first pension rates for Uncovenanted servants were issued, which gave them the precedent of the English Civil Service rules, a pension of half salary after 30 years' service, with no maximum limit. In consequence of that, some Uncovenanted officers who were receiving a pay of 24,000 rupees a year, on retirement received the exorbitant pension of 12,000 rupees, or £1,200. The Secretary of State, in 1855, properly drew attention to this lavishness, and ordered that in no case was—

> "A larger pension than £400 to be granted to Uncovenanted servants receiving salaries of 700 to 1,000 rupees a month, nor a larger pension than £500 per annum to Uncovenanted servants receiving salaries above that amount."

These are the words that are used in the Despatch of the Secretary of State. The word "rupees" is rightly used for the salaries, and "sterling pounds" are used for the pensions. These terms are all that we ask for. And such was the fair, just, and reasonable ruling of the Secretary of State in 1855, which was afterwards distorted into such cruel terms as those I have described. We ask for nothing more than a return to these moderate lines, which would still leave the professors and engineers and their colleagues with half, or less than half, the pensions of covenanting civilians, and two-thirds, or less than two-thirds, of the pensions of the law officers, and far longer terms of service. Even as late as the year 1872 the prospectuses of Cooper's Hill College contained a statement of furlough allowances which was given in rupees and sterling, as if these were convertible terms, and where the salaries are stated in rupees this footnote is appended—"Ten rupees are nearly equivalent in value to £1 sterling"; and in the Pension Code officially issued by the Government of India, until recently, this note was prefixed—"Wherever in the following Resolution a pension is stated in sterling the equivalent in rupees is meant at 2s. the rupee." Sir, it seems to me that I need say no more. I make no *ad misericordiam* appeal to the Government or to my hon. Friend (Sir J. Gorst), because I recognize that they could not accept one. I ask for nothing more than substantial justice for men who have nobly done their duty to their adopted country, and who have been a credit to the country which gave them birth. I claim to have shown that native public opinion among the taxpayers of India recognizes the justice of the claims now made, and wishes the Government to be honest and not be content with mere departmental inquiries and decisions, or, at any rate, instead of making its inquiries within the four walls of the India Office, to come out into the open light of day and submit the matter to such an inquiry as it would receive from the impartial consideration of this House. I think I have also shown that the present cost of honesty will be a mere fraction of the cost of the Simla picnic, and that it will be a diminishing and ultimately a vanishing cost; that the men who ask for this justice are men of the highest culture and the most costly scientific training, who are worthy of good treatment at our hands; and, above all, I have shown that the spirit undoubtedly, and possibly even the letter, of their contract entitles them to be paid not in a depreciated currency, but, like all their colleagues in India, both native and European, as they were promised to be paid 20, 30, and 40 years ago. Moreover, Sir, I think I have shown that the pensions in this depreciated currency, even at the present moment, are at or below starvation point, and are going lower and lower every year; that those pensions, if looked upon as deferred pay, were hoarded by the Government at a time when rupees were worth 2s. or 2s. 3d. a piece, whereas they are now saying that the rupee

is only worth 1s. 4½d., so that consequently these depreciated payments are in reality a breach of trust on the part of the Government; and I have also shown that the Government, having never paid these pensions at the commercial rate of exchange, when that rate was 2s. 3d. and 2s. 4d., has no right to pay them at that commercial rate now that the rupee is at 1s. 4½d. In a word, I claim to have shown that the Government is bound by every dictate, alike of expediency and of honour, fairly to fulfil the promise of its old covenants:—"In all payments,"—really and honestly all, and not "all except those we can wriggle out of—"to be made under these presents the pound sterling shall be considered equal to, and shall be calculated after the rate of 10 rupees." Sir, I now beg to move the Resolution which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that a Select Committee should be appointed to inquire into the grievances of the members of the Indian Uncovenanted Civil Services, with special reference to their pension and leave rules, and to the effect produced by the fall in the value of silver on their family remittances, their leave allowances, and their provision for old age"—(*Sir Roper Lethbridge*).

—instead thereof:—

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Sir, the House is not asked this evening to decide as to the justice of the claim put forward by the mover of the Resolution; it is merely asked to decide whether a sufficient case has been made out to justify it in appointing a Select Committee to inquire into the grievances under which these clients of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Kensington (Sir R. Lethbridge) believe themselves to be suffering. I wish it to be understood that in supporting this Resolution to-night I support it solely from the standpoint that such an inquiry is necessary and ought to be granted, and I am bound to say that, in my opinion, it is the fault of the Government of India alone that such a discussion as we have entered upon this evening has been brought about, because if Her Majesty's Government had done that which it officially announced its intention to do—namely, if it had followed up the Public Service Commission by a general Parliamentary inquiry—that inquiry would have covered the matters which have been brought before the House to-night, and we should have been spared the need for occupying the time of the House with the case we now feel it our duty to present. I do not intend to follow the hon. Gentleman who has moved this Resolution in his careful and elaborate statement of the grievances he has just laid before the House, because it seems to me that all I am called on to do is to corroborate what has been said as to the need of an inquiry, and to give the House the reasons upon which it seems to me that the House ought to vote in favour of the Resolution. For my part, I wonder that the Government have not already given some intimation to those who have been pressing for the inquiry now asked that they are prepared to grant it; and I wonder at their not having done this, because, although I have no means of knowing what are the views of the noble Lord the Secretary for India (Lord Cross) I might well conceive that if he were here this evening, and had to reply to this proposal, he would say it was the farthest thing from his desire that any inquiry into these matters should be shut out; but that, on the contrary, he was disposed to regard this case as one in which an inquiry might well take place. I can, however, also fancy his saying, were he here to-night, that on talking the matter over with the able Under Secretary (Sir J. Gorst), who will presently answer me, that it had been suggested that he should urge upon the House as a reason why this inquiry ought not to be granted was that it would be premature. If that be a fair guess at the views entertained by the noble Lord—and I shall look with curiosity to the reply of the Under Secretary in order to know how far I may be wrong in my hazardings—I would suggest to the House that the inquiry which we ask for to-night is not only not premature, but that any such reason which may be used by the Under Secretary will fall entirely short of a complete answer to our request. I will here endeavour to anticipate what may be the possible reasons the Under Secretary may put to the House. He

may tell us that there has been the Public Service Commission, that its Report is now in the hands of the Government, that the Government are considering it, and that, until the Government have considered it, it is not fair for this House to press upon the Government any demand for a further inquiry. I should hardly think that the able Under Secretary would regard that as a sufficient reply if he were to carefully think the matter over in his mind; because if he were to advance reasons such as these he is well aware that it would be open to any hon. Member to interrupt him by reminding him that the Public Service Commission had been expressly forbidden to examine into the matters as to which this House is asked to grant an inquiry, and that, therefore, it is quite impossible that that report can be of any help or utility in the consideration of this question, and I would further remind the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for India that at the time of the presentation of the Report of that Public Service Commission there was a formal declaration on the part of the Indian Government itself, dated from Simla, in which it told the Public Service Commissioners that the investigations which were then being commenced were to be followed by a regular and ample Parliamentary inquiry. And here I would suggest to the House that if it thinks there is, at least, a very strong case made out for inquiry as to the claims submitted on behalf of a body of men who run considerable risks in regard to the climate they have to endure, and who are surrounded by all sorts of hostile influences, it will be futile to meet their claims by saying we ought to wait for the decision of the Government as to some slow method of re-organization or for some new mode of inquiry—we do not know what—which is not open to the public, or for conclusions which we shall not be able to challenge, and the only reasons for which we shall not be able to appreciate. I can imagine the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary saying that this is an inquiry which he is obliged to refuse in the interests of the natives of India; and I can also understand his expressing his surprise—I do not mean any real surprise on his part, because I am aware that nothing I could put forward would surprise him—but still expressing that sort of surprise which he is able to utilize so effectively when he thinks it is likely to tell on the House—that I, of all other persons, should be the one to get up in this assembly and second this Resolution. Last year a different motion was submitted by the hon. Member for Central Hull (Mr. H. S. King), who asked the House to determine the matter by giving a specific judgment on the statement. He then submitted in favour of the justice of the claims then put forward without going through the process of a preliminary inquiry such as is asked for this evening. But at the present moment all the House is asked to do is to appoint a Committee to inquire as to whether the claims put forward on behalf of the uncovenanted Service of India can be proved. The motion last year was that a verdict should be found. All that is now asked is not that the House should act as a jury to deliver a verdict, but that it should appoint a Select Committee generally to inquire as to whether the case, which has been put before the House two years in succession, has any foundation, and if the jury finds that it has then this House will be asked as the tribunal most capable of so doing to find its verdict. But what was the case put forward by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary last year? It was that he had to defend a people whom he rightly described as the poverty-stricken Indian taxpayers. On behalf of those whom the hon. Gentleman so described, he appealed to this House not to injure the poor Europeans, and as to the natives they had imposed upon them a heavier salt-tax. But hard pressed as the natives of India are they do not desire any injustice to their fellow subjects. They have to ask for redress for their own grievances and are not disposed to refuse inquiry into the grievances of others. A self-denying Government like that represented by the Under Secretary of the moment might make even small economies in regard to some of the well-paid Indian officials, such as the Members of that Council which may possibly be useful, but which manages to hide most successfully the services it renders either to the natives or to the European subjects in India. The distinctions between the Motion of last year

and that of this year, is that the Motion of last year asserted a claim and asked the House to decide on it at once, whilst that of to-night only asks that a Select Committee may be appointed and that evidence may be taken as to whether the alleged grievance has any foundation or not. I understand from the slight motion of the head of the Under Secretary for India, that he thinks I have no right to express an opinion on behalf of the natives of India. I think I may tell him that in the movement which is now taking place in India—a movement which is necessarily confined to only a few millions, 2,000,000 out of the 200,000,000 of the subjects of the Empire, because it is confined to the English-speaking population—there is a growing desire to break down the barriers which have been officially erected between the Europeans and the natives, and that with the knowledge of the English language and customs, there is coming a hope that there may be more sympathetic and hearty co-operation between them. The whole of these natives through my mouth ask the House to grant this inquiry to-night. I had intended, but it is quite needless, to go into the legal point, dating back to the year 1813. I had proposed to do that because last year the Under Secretary for India just framed a proposition, which if I appreciated his printed words, and understood his spoken words when I listened to them, rather suggested that prior to 1826 there were no pensions at all in India. That is not so, and the hon. Mover of the Resolution was perfectly accurate when he took back the Covenanted pensions to an earlier date, and the Uncovenanted pensions to 1815, and when he reminded the House that as long as the rate of exchange was high, and made a profit to those paying the pensions, there was no talk about that rate. The language used right through until you come to the despatch of 1862, which has been quoted, has only one bearing. I do not, however, ask the House to judge as to this, and I will not attempt to weary the House with the details respecting it. Nor will I indulge in the folly of asking the attention of the House to the services of men whose services must have been recognized even by the blindest. There is no doubt that to English energy in facing conditions which even now are in some cases terrific, as is the fact now with those in Burmah, who have to face fever, and the pressure upon them of hostile life conditions, our position in India is due. I will not weaken a good case by pleading the virtue of the client. Before the Committee, if it be appointed, they will make out a *bond fide* legal claim, or they will fail to do so. If the Government think they will fail, why do they refuse this inquiry? In that case no injury could be done to the native taxpayers. If, however, the Government think they will prove their case, then on behalf of the natives I say we do not want to be dishonest to those who are associated with us; and we claim the same honest treatment for the European servants of the State as for the native Civil servants. I will not at this hour occupy the time of the House further. The whole case has been completely put by the hon. Mover of the Resolution, but I do ask the House to remember that we are not to determine whether that case is made out, but only whether an inquiry should be granted to suppliants who come to you for a hearing, and who have no opportunity of obtaining it anywhere else. Before the Empire was in India Parliament rendered such appeals unnecessary by holding inquiries at stated periods into all matters connected with the Indian Service. That system does not prevail now. And we are to be told that a Public Service Commission which has nothing to do with the question, some finance inquiries which never went near it, some sort of departmental inquiry of which we know nothing, and over which we have no control, should be substituted for the Parliamentary inquiry which was always granted to suppliants here in previous cases. The natives join hand-in-hand with the Europeans in asking that this House should give them the opportunity of making out their case.

*MR. J. MACLEAN (Oldham): I had not intended to take part in this debate, at all events at so early an hour, but I feel bound to do so in order to express the regret with which I have heard the speech just delivered by the hon. Member for Northampton. My hon. Friend the Member for North Kensington (Sir R. Lethbridge) stated the case for the Uncovenanted Civil Service clearly and

ably, but the hon. Member for Northampton, who seconded the Amendment, seemed to me to be anxious rather to make a little political capital out of the case than to state the arguments in favour of the proposition before the House. The hon. Member says he speaks in the name of the natives of India, or of some considerable portion of them.

*Mr. BRADLAUGH: I carefully said exactly the opposite. I carefully said that I could only speak for a comparatively small number of the millions of India, because I could only speak for the English-speaking portion of them.

*Mr. MACLEAN: Well, Sir, I do not see that there was the slightest necessity for bringing in on this occasion any reference whatever to the English-speaking natives. I do not see that they have any authority to decide what is to be done in this case. They are not the millions of India, and we do not appeal to them but to the Government of India to do justice in this case. I think it a great pity that the hon. Member should have taken advantage of this discussion to lecture the House on the grievances of the natives of India and to demand that some inquiry should be made into their grievances. It appears that the natives of India, with whom he is acquainted, have put him up to engage in a sort of political intrigue, and they say that if justice is done to the Europeans they will ask the aid of the Europeans in obtaining a Parliamentary inquiry into their own grievances.

*Mr. BRADLAUGH: I deeply regret to interrupt the hon. Member——

*Mr. MACLEAN: I decline to give way to the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member is very fond of interrupting those who are opposed to him. He has had full opportunity for stating his case, and I appeal to the House as to whether I am misrepresenting his arguments. Well, Sir, the question to be considered is a very simple one. It is whether the Uncovenanted civil servants are fairly treated in having their pensions paid in rupees now that the value of the rupee is so seriously depreciated? I remember an argument addressed to the House last year by a very eminent authority on political economy, the Chairman of Ways and Means (Mr. Courtney), to the effect that the Uncovenanted civil servants have really no grievance because, although there has been a reduction of from 30 to 50 per cent in the amount of their pensions, the prices of all the commodities they have to purchase in England have fallen in an equal proportion, and therefore they are as well off as they used to be. That argument carried a good deal of weight in the House at the time, but I do not think it will stand careful examination. We all know that although prices have fallen in this country, the standard of living has been greatly raised, and men having to occupy a certain position in society find it as costly to maintain that position now as it was before there was a very considerable fall in prices. I think it will be generally admitted by all classes in this House that there never was a time when living was more luxurious and costly than at the present moment. I think, therefore, that argument may very well be put on one side. But it may be asked why should not this idea of dealing with the pensions of the Uncovenanted servants be applied to the Covenanted servants also? My opinion is that the servants of the Crown in India are extremely well paid at this moment, that the pensions and pay were fixed at a time when the hardships of Indian service were very much greater than they are now. In supporting this proposal for an inquiry into the grievances of the Uncovenanted Service, I do not pledge myself for a moment against supporting the introduction at some future time of a scheme for the reduction of possibly all the pay and pensions of the services in India. But it is obvious that if the argument of the reduction of prices in this country is to have any force whatever against the payment in sterling of the pensions of one class of servants it applies with equal force to the other classes of servants in India, and also to the pay of the whole Civil Service in England. The salaries of all the permanent civil servants of the Crown in England were fixed at a time when prices had not suffered that very serious deterioration which has been induced of late years. There is no doubt that men in the enjoyment of fixed incomes in this country get a very great deal more for their money than they used to do, if you speak only of the prices of commodities. Therefore, if the argument applies at all, it ought

to apply all round, and I think it is a very unfair thing that the uncovenanted civil servants in India should be the body on which the experiment of applying it should be made. I sympathize with them a good deal, because I do not at all accept the doctrine of the Member for North Kensington, that we ought to look forward to the day when the European servants in the service of the Crown in India will be extinguished except in the higher offices. The existence of these uncovenanted servants was a great security for our rule. I sympathize with them very heartily because they have not the same interest at the India Office as the covenanted servants, who have men to speak for them and ask that their claims may be treated with indulgence. The uncovenanted servants therefore appeal to this House. If the Under Secretary for India talks of the sufferings to be endured by the natives of India, if they have to pay a little more on account of the concession of these claims, we may fairly say with regard to India as to other countries, that honesty is the best policy in the treatment of its public servants, and nothing will be lost to the people of India by giving fair play to these men who now ask for justice at our hands.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: Allow me to explain that my only reason for mentioning the natives of India was that last year the Under Secretary stated that the natives disagreed with the claims put forward by the Member for Central Hull. It was because of that line of argument, and not from any claim to dictate to the House, that I spoke as I did.

MR. MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I am pleased to think that this inquiry has been asked by this deserving body of men, and I hope it will be granted, for I consider it the highest prerogative of this House to help those to right who suffer wrong. I cannot but hope that the House will agree in thinking that the hon. Gentleman who moved the Motion and went into such details with respect to the grievances of these Gentlemen has made out a *primâ facie* case for inquiry. I am sure that all of us were struck and interested by the very splendid speech delivered by Lord Dufferin the day before yesterday—a speech in which he, coming home with all his blushing honours on him, fresh from governing directly nearly two millions of people, and governing indirectly one million more, said that one of the highest privileges any of these people whether natives or Europeans could have was the supervision of the House of Commons. Two days after the delivery of that speech the House is given an opportunity not of coming to a judgment, but of exercising its supervision as regards the grievances of certain Indian public servants. The persons on whose behalf this motion is made are no fewer than 1,500, they are our own flesh and blood, and men of the same social position as Members of this House. Having endured extreme hardships in the trying climate of India they have come home occupying the position, always painful, of poor gentlemen, and the House is asked to grant an inquiry in order to see if their poverty cannot be made more tolerable. These men have justified by their noble actions British rule in India. When this country accepted the responsibility of governing India it accepted the responsibility of governing it in such a way as would justify it to its own conscience and to the conscience of Europe. We have endeavoured to develop the resources of India, to give it education, to make bridges and roads. By whom were all these vast and splendid efforts carried out? Not by the covenanted, but by the uncovenanted servants of India. I am glad the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) has pointed out that the natives of India are in favour of this inquiry. If the educated Indians did not desire an inquiry into the grievances of these civil servants they would be guilty of the grossest injustice, for it is from the labour of these men that India has derived so much advantage. These men have managed to weld together Eastern and Western civilization. Surely in common justice they are entitled be an inquiry. I am not entirely bereft of personal motives in this matter. A great many of my fellow countrymen are in the service, and I got a letter from one of them only the day before yesterday. He writes—

"We ought not to be allowed to starve after spending all our lives in working for the Government."

That is typical of the feeling of the public servants. I have special reasons for knowing the miserable circumstances of

some of these men, who, having spent 38 years in the public service under the most trying conditions, are now enduring the miseries of genteel poverty. My friend encloses in his letter a photograph. I do not know whether it is a material one, but it shows how deeply these uncovenanted servants feel their position. It represents an uncovenanted servant as a sandwich man, but looking, as all the uncovenanted servants do, every inch a gentleman, and upon the board he is carrying are the words "A pensioner of the Indian Government." If not actually, these men are morally beggars. On these grounds I hope the House will favourably consider the claims now put forward—claims that are backed by public opinion in India and by the Government of India in India, and supported by all the Anglo-Indian Press. I do not want to bring in a word that may seem anything in the nature of intimidation, but I say that if this Resolution is opposed by the Government we know on whom to lay the responsibility of the opposition, the fifteen wise men who constitute the Council for India, who are powerful not for good but for mischief, and still baulk every effort of the Government of India. I hope the Secretary of State and the Under Secretary will exercise a firm and wise discretion, and offer some solace to these deserving public servants who have had the word of promise kept to the ear and so broken to the hope.

*COLONEL HILL (Bristol, S.): I desire to give my general support to the Resolution what has been so ably moved and seconded. I do not propose to deal with it merely as a question of justice, though I hope that lever is sufficiently strong to move the House to grant this request, but I do so on the ground of public policy, and I venture stoutly to maintain that it is contrary to all sound commercial economy to allow a large class of public servants to remain in a state of chronic dissatisfaction smarting under what they consider a great injustice without making some attempt to remove their grievances. The few observations I propose to make will be directed more especially to one class, that of the engineers called "Uncovenanted," though I believe some years ago that term was ordered to cease to apply to them. The engineers of the public works of India have been more correctly described—the class I am referring to—by the Commission lately sitting in India as "Imperial Engineers." They are formed of three classes, the "Royal Engineers," the "Stanley," and the "Cooper's Hill" Engineers. These are all of the same social position; they have received similar education—in fact, I believe the expense of the Cooper's Hill education is higher than that of the Royal Engineers—they are of equal skill and ability, as has been acknowledged by high authority; they are employed on similar work, and several high authorities (Secretaries of State and Viceroys of India) have given them most clearly to understand, in official documents, that they were to be treated in a similar manner. Such was the recommendation of the Public Service Commission appointed by the Government of India in 1886-7, which issued its Report in October last year. As a matter of fact, the Civil Engineers of India would be perfectly satisfied if effect were given to the recommendation of that Commission, and would accept it as a remedy for the grievances to which they are subjected. But no attention, so far as I am aware, has ever been given to that Report, or to the assurances of Secretaries of State and Viceroys to which I have referred either in matters of pay, leave allowances, or pensions. This last is the most important consideration and one as to which the greatest injustice can be shown. It is quite conceivable that officers may be prepared to accept the privations of service in India—and I may remind the House that those privations are very considerable, not only from climatic influences, but the disadvantages of long years of separation from their children, if not from their wives—they may accept these privations as necessary conditions of a service into which they have voluntarily entered, but it is a very different thing when they see the provision for their old age in the way of pensions diminishing visibly before their eyes. To illustrate the injustice which these Civil Engineers of the Imperial Service are suffering, I will draw attention to a few facts. An officer of the Royal Engineers may be serving under an engineer of the Stanley or Cooper's Hill type, and after 28 years of service the former retires on a pension of £500, while the latter has 5,000 rupees or £333; the former may attain

to £700 sterling, while the Civil Engineer, who performs the same duties exactly, if he succeed in getting to the top of the tree (an advantage open to few indeed), he can only receive 7,000 rupees or £466. I do not say that the pay of the Royal Engineers is too much. I do not think it is, but I do maintain that the Stanley and Cooper's Hill Engineers receive too little; it is less than they were given to expect by the terms of the agreement under which they entered the service, less than the Government themselves intended they should receive, less than suffices to maintain themselves and their families, and less than suffices for a decent provision for old age when they retire after many years faithful service in India. I put it to the House, can the best services of these gentlemen be expected—is it possible for them with the best intentions to give their best services? No mercantile firm would for a moment think of maintaining in their service a staff of servants who were smarting under such a sense of injustice, working with such a mill-stone round their necks. Those who know the public works of India cannot but feel the money is very well spent upon them. What would be the cost of giving satisfaction to an important and useful class of public servants, compared with the difference that would be made in the cost of the works by having servants thoroughly well contented with their service, and striving to do the best they possibly could. These are honourable, high-minded gentlemen, incapable of availing themselves of the many opportunities which occur for increasing their pay while they are in India. It is most important that such a standard of service should be kept up. We heard something of the poor Indian ratepayer, but I am not quite so sure that he is so poor as has been represented, and as the hon. Member for Northampton put it, I am certain he is not so poor that he need wish to be dishonest. I would remind the House that the natives of India derive the greatest possible benefit from the good service of the gentlemen for whom we are pleading; and not only so, but they have benefited very largely by the circumstances which have injured the prospects of these gentlemen. There can be no doubt that the depreciation of the rupee has been, in many parts of India, of very great service to the industries of the country. It has been asserted that gold can purchase more now than it used to do, and that may be so as regards luxuries, but I think there is not much question of luxuries on a pension of £333 a year. The cost of education, clothing, house rent, and many necessaries of life has not decreased, and in many instances the prices of these things have increased. But I do not think this is an argument that ought to affect the merits of the case at all. If it were raised, it would be an argument for revising the whole system of pensions and salaries throughout India, and possibly at home also. I hope Her Majesty's Government will see their way to grant this inquiry not only with a view to considering the justice of the case—a great country like ours cannot afford to be unjust—but for the interest of the Public Service itself.

*MR. J. G. FITZGERALD (Longford, S.): I am desirous of supporting the Motion for inquiry, for there appears on the face of it a legitimate claim for redress of a grievance. Among these public servants whose cause we plead, there are many of the profession to which I have the honour to belong. I think it will be agreed that it is a misfortune amounting almost to ruination for a man to put his hand into his pocket and find that though he put £500 in he can only take 340 sovereigns out. These men have had to work, many of them, for 30 years before attaining to their pension in a foreign country under severe climatic disadvantages, and I think there can be no doubt that we ought to take the first step to inquire with a view to removing the burden that rests upon the shoulders of these men through the depreciation in the value of the rupee after they are seeking repose in this country from long and arduous labour in India. The Uncovenanted servants assert, and I think justly assert, that they have been induced to enter this special branch of the service under something very like false pretences. In the first place, some of them actually have covenants with the Indian Government; and in the second place, they assert they were induced to enter the service on the faith of official prospectuses setting out that a certain amount of their pay would be deducted

which hereafter would be paid back to them in pension allowances. Nor has the hon. Gentleman who moved this Resolution explained to the House that this pay was actually deducted at the time when the rupee was at the value of 2s., but then when the men had completed their term of arduous service, the Government of India turned round and said we can only give you back 1s. 4½d. instead of the 2s. we stopped from your pay although we have had the interest of your money all this time. The Under Secretary for India will probably resist the granting of the commission on three grounds. In the first place, I expect he will say that this unfortunate body of men have no case in law, and he will add, what we are constantly hearing from the Treasury Bench when we ask for redress of grievances, if you think you have a grievance, you can take legal action. But it is not an easy matter for an isolated and comparatively poor body of men to go to law with a rich Government. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman will ground his resistance upon solicitude for the poor Indian taxpayer, but as the hon. Member for North Kensington has shown we are anxious to save the taxpayer from the cost of legal proceedings. This new Radicalism of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary and his Party is becoming very apparent to the people of this country, it is simply an enamel with which they cover their Tory resistance to every appeal made to them for justice to any particular class. Surely if the Radicalism is not more apparent than real the friends of the new peasant proprietors of Ireland will not think it too Radical a measure to extend to this body of Indian civil servants the same privileges extended to native gentlemen in the same service by paying them in pounds sterling that they may enjoy in their own country that repose which the native gentleman does for the amount he receives in rupees in India? I implore the House in dealing with this particular question, which, after all, is only the appeal of a small body of men, to consider how it can in any way affect the 200 millions of Indian taxpayers. How in the world can it improve the condition of Indian taxpayers, to place a certain tax on the salaries of 1,500 men, when you leave alone the salaries of 4,350 other servants of the same class, and do nothing at all with the number of other officials who are under the Indian Government. I implore the House in considering this question to refrain from being dragged into the legal net, which the Under Secretary will undoubtedly spread for them, of obscure statutes and dried-up Acts of Parliament, and instead of dealing with this body of men on the narrow ledge of legal technicalities and ill-construed Acts framed by partizan lawyers for partizan purposes, to deal with it as the House of Commons ought to deal with the claims of an honest body of men on the broader basis of honesty, justice, and equity.

MR. MALLOCK (Devon, Torquay): I will only detain the House a few minutes in expressing my hope that the Government will tell us they are not going to resist this inquiry. I served in India some years—not in either branch of the Civil Service—but I have a great many friends in both branches, and I know enough of the condition of those in both services to say that though the work of both is most important and hard and onerous in an equal degree, still all the prizes in India fall to the covenanted service. This is no ground of complaint by members of the uncovenanted service, and I was sorry to hear an hon. Member just now make that complaint. I do not think the uncovenanted servants at all complain that the covenanted servants have the best appointments. The uncovenanted servants accepted their engagements with their eyes open, knew their employment, and that they would be paid in rupees while in India; they recognised always that the covenanted service would have the better pay in India, better appointments, and they recognised also that they would have better pensions; but what they did not recognize was that their lower and more meagre pensions after retirement were liable to be cut down 20 or 30 per cent below what they were given to understand would be received. Perhaps they ought never to have looked upon the pensions as likely to be paid in pounds, but all official notifications when they entered the service referred to the amount in sterling, £300 or £400, or whatever it might be. We have heard of profound scholars being supposed to think in Latin, and dream in

Greek, but I do not think it could have been expected of young men going to join the service in India that they would calculate their pensions in rupees, annas, and pies. Lord Dufferin a day or two ago, speaking in the City, referred to the Civil Service of India in the most eulogistic terms, and, as I read his remarks, he referred to both branches of the Civil Service. He spoke in the highest possible terms of the manner in which they performed their administrative and political duties in India, compared to which, he said, a great deal of the work of the House of Commons was mere child's play, and I, having been in India for some time, and in the House of Commons for some short time, am inclined to agree with Lord Dufferin. What has happened is this. The members of one branch of that service of which Lord Dufferin spoke so highly, owing purely to the accident that the pensions were fixed in rupees originally, after they have served long and faithfully in India come home and then find that not only do they receive 20 or 30 per cent less than they expected, but their prospects are decreasing every year. I remember last year when the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed his conversion scheme it was stated in this House and in another place, and I daresay hon. Members heard the same thing repeated among their own constituents, that it was a very hard measure for widows and persons who had no faith in any security but the Funds that they should have their income suddenly reduced so much, but they at all events had the opportunity in nearly every case of taking their capital out of the Funds and investing it elsewhere. These unfortunate men, on the other hand, who have fixed pensions, see their income falling every year, and have no hope of arresting the decline. I do hope the Government will recognize the position and give us an assurance that they will give this matter their most serious attention.

*SIR W. PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.): I do not think that any man who has had acquaintance with the Services in India will at all differ from hon. Members in the estimate of the arduous nature of the work performed by the men whose claims are now urged by the hon. Member for North Kensington, and the effective manner in which their duties are discharged; but that is hardly a matter we have to consider in relation to the proposal brought before the House to-night. I must say that, although I agree with a portion of the argument of the hon. Member for North Kensington, I think he is not well advised in the manner in which he has framed his Resolution, because in that Resolution the House is called upon to commit itself to a very decided opinion that a Select Committee should be appointed to inquire into grievances of the Uncovenanted Services, with special reference to their pension and leave rates, and the effect of the depreciation of silver on their pensions; but, as was just now mentioned, the Public Service Commission, as I think it is called, has reported upon these matters. If hon. Members will turn to the Report of the Commission, they will find that the whole of the question is virtually taken out of our hands unless we wish to mix ourselves up in it, and that the Commission did report on these very matters. It seems to me it would be very rash for this House to pass such a censure as is implied in this Motion on the Government of India. The Indian Government are quite capable of dealing with a question of this character; in fact they are dealing with it now, and we have quite sufficient work of our own to do without interfering with work which can be best done in India by persons acquainted with the wants of the Civil servants and the circumstances of the country. I agree with the hon. Member for North Kensington that the Government are bound to consider certain individual cases. Those gentlemen who joined the Service after the promulgation of the regulation of 1871 must have been well aware of the nature of the pensions they would receive, but that was not the case with those who joined before the regulation was promulgated. As an illustration of how harshly some of these Civil servants have been dealt with, I will mention that the bond under which one of these gentlemen took up his service in India, specifies that all payments to be made under the bond should be calculated at the rate of £1 to 10 rupees. In that bond, though reference is made to pension, it is not intimated it shall be treated differently, or other than pay. Again, in the

prospectus of the Indian Office in September, 1866, the salaries of the Indian Telegraphic Establishment were all designated in pounds and not in rupees. I think it is a great hardship that one method of payment should be adopted by the Government in India and another in England. What is sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander. The Government has not been the goose in this matter. Out of a total of £12,224, which one official was entitled to for his 21 years' service, the Government have positively gained 20,461 rupees by the proceeding of taking the £ not at the rate of exchange, but at 10 rupees. Then why not take the pension at 10 rupees per £ as they had taken the pay? Whatever legal claim the Government may have to bind these civil servants to the terms of their bond, they have no moral right to do so. Special cases, of which there are not a very great number, ought to be fairly treated by the Government; and, therefore, I hope the Under Secretary of State for India will give an assurance on the part of the Government that individual claims shall receive equitable consideration. I regret very much that the hon. Member for Kensington has not confined himself to a specific class of cases. It is impossible for this House to take up the whole question of the pay, pensions, and allowances to uncovenanted civil servants. That matter is already being dealt with in an effective way by the Government of India. The subject is a large one and requires so much attention and consideration that it cannot be dealt with rapidly, but if the hon. Member the Under Secretary for India cannot give me the undertaking I ask for, if it is in order, I shall move an Amendment to the Resolution of the hon. Member for North Kensington.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot move an Amendment to the Amendment now before the House.

*SIR W. PLOWDEN: Then, in that case, I will only impress on the Under Secretary for India the necessity of giving the House such an assurance as I have indicated.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): I can assure the House in answer to the appeal that has just been made, that the Government are in the habit of dealing with every case that is brought before them on its merits. There are cases in which furlough allowances and even pensions have to be paid in sterling, in consequence of the peculiar and special circumstances of the agreement entered into; and all these contracts are examined, not in the pettifogging spirit which the Member for Kensington rather attributed to the Secretary of State, but with a sincere desire to do full justice, and to give the officers, whose admirable services have been rightly extolled, everything to which they are entitled. It is not a pleasant task to me to have to get up apparently to resist appeals that are made for inquiries into alleged grievances. I can corroborate all that has been said as to the deserts of these officers. I have often had to praise them; I have often appealed for a charitable construction to be put upon their acts; and I have no wish in any way to undervalue their services or to induce the House to believe that they do not merit their remuneration and their rewards. But when a claim is made for pensions to which after careful examination I am bound to say I do not consider these gentlemen to be entitled, I have to remember that in this House I represent the taxpayer of India. I should fail in my duty if I did not warn the House that it must not be generous with other people's money, and in meting out justice to those who are entitled to the utmost consideration we must also remember that the fund from which the money has to be paid is raised from the millions of poor taxpayers in India for whom we are trustees, and whose money we ought to administer with the utmost caution and care. The discussion has been rendered a little more difficult than it would otherwise have been by the enormous amount of canvassing to which individual Members have been subjected. It is not a matter in which our constituents generally take a lively interest; but I suppose there is not a Member in the House who has not a relation or a friend or an influential supporter directly or indirectly interested in the question. I have been canvassed myself; I was canvassed by a lady, who in the strongest terms pleaded with me to support the Motion for inquiry by speech and vote,

and nothing but the fact of my being Under Secretary saved me from yielding to the temptation. There are two perfectly distinct classes of public servants to be dealt with—first, the existing public servants in India, and, secondly, those who have retired from the service and who have to receive the pension they have earned. The respective interests of the two classes are different from each other, but they have been adroitly mixed up by some speakers. I will deal with them separately. Nothing that I can conceive can be more detrimental to the interests of existing officers than the appointment of the proposed Committee, because there has been sitting for two years in India the Public Service Commission which has taken evidence that fills five volumes. Its inquiry was brought to an end a year ago, and since that time the Secretary of State and the Government of India have been actively engaged in elaborating a radical change in the public service in India. The matter is still under consideration, and therefore it would be unbecoming in me to indicate the conclusion at which the Secretary of State is likely to arrive; but it is a great mistake to suppose that he or the Government of India will be blindly led by the mere suggestions of the Commission. The vast mass of evidence is being considered and digested, and a plan for the reorganization of the service is far advanced, and, if the House does not interfere, is likely to be speedily matured and acted upon. It is clear you cannot deal with the grievances of any existing servants until you have settled what is to be the ultimate plan upon which the public service of India is to be constituted. I have listened to many of the grievances. I remember the grievances alleged in the debate of last year; and the Government have received many memorials and representations pointing out weaknesses in our present system, all of which have been to the best of our ability considered and digested. In the new arrangements regard will be had to these representations, and I trust the invidious distinctions between the high officers of the Uncovenanted Service and those of the Covenanted Service now complained of may be done away with. You must obviously wait until this is done before you consider the circumstances of the existing servants and how you can best remedy their grievances. It is the most earnest desire of the Secretary of State to consider every class of existing servants as soon as the new plan is settled, to bring them into harmony with the new system and to remove their grievances. Now, I know that this plan will not suit the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). That hon. Member, who probably has not read the five volumes of evidence, is in favour of endless inquiry, and would overwhelm the Government with information. I hope the House will not fall into the trap. The hon. Member says he speaks for the educated classes of India, but he does not speak for the poor people, for those who really pay the taxes; the Government alone represents them and looks after their interests. It is in their interest and on their behalf that the Government are proceeding with practical reforms, and they do not want the time of the House wasted in the endless inquiries to which the hon. Member for Northampton invites us. This consideration appears to weigh even in the mind of the hon. Member for Kensington, who practically sinks the grievances of the existing service and concentrates his efforts upon the case of retired officers entitled to pensions, and the whole burden of his complaint was that these officers are paid in rupees and not in sterling.

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but those who heard me will, I am sure, bear me out when I say that I directed my remarks to the circumstances of all existing members of the Departments which I enumerated—not only the retired, but the present servants of the Government.

*SIR J. GORST: That was, no doubt, so, but the hon. Member has misunderstood me. It was entirely in reference to their pensions, and not in reference to their position in the service that he spoke. My answer is that if the House were to have a Committee of that extremely limited scope, there is nothing to inquire into. The facts are perfectly well known already. They are these: The name "Uncovenanted" is a misleading epithet. There is no such thing as a really Uncovenanted civil servant. Every man enters the service under a contract, which the Government are as much bound to keep as any gen-

tleman is bound to observe his contract with a servant. I approach this part of the question with some regret, because I have been denounced as likely to mislead the House by casting a net of law round it and by pettifogging legal arguments involving the obscurities of old statutes. I will not, however, quote a single musty statute, but endeavour to deal with the case from the point of view of reason and common sense. Now, one part of the contract of these gentlemen was that at a certain period they were to get a pension, which was to be paid in India in rupees. Up to 1862 all these pensions were paid in India in rupees. But gentlemen who came back to England had to employ an agent to receive their pensions and transmit them to this country. In the year 1862 it was represented that this was a great hardship, and in consequence of this representation the Government conferred upon them the boon of payment in London, but it was upon the express stipulation that the payment should be made in London at the official rate of exchange. The hon. Member for Kensington has shown a great anxiety that I should produce a certain appendix to the prospectus of the Cooper's Hill College, in 1871, which the hon. Member was sure would put my case out of Court. Well, I experienced great difficulty in getting this appendix. But it was at length discovered laid on the Table of the House, printed with extraordinary expedition, and circulated among many Members of the House. I will call attention to the paragraphs of this document relating to the payment of pensions. This is the final paragraph of this document—

"An officer shall, on retirement, have the option of drawing his pension either in India or from the Home Treasury. After exercising his option on retirement, he may at a subsequent period change the place of payment from India to England or *vice versa*. This change can, however, be allowed but once. The payments in England will be made at the rate of exchange which is annually fixed in communication with the Lords of the Treasury for the adjustment of transactions between the British and the Indian Exchequers."

*Sir R. LETHBRIDGE: Will my hon. Friend read the part referring to salaries?

*Sir J. GORST: I do not see why the whole document should be read; but the point about salaries is that they are described in rupees or pounds sterling, and the rupee is given at 2s., at which it stood in 1862 and for some years afterwards. But that does not affect the regulations under which the pensions are to be paid. The House will remember that it was in 1862 that this stipulation as to payment of pensions was made. The rupee had for many years been 2s., and nobody supposed it would go down. It remained there until 1872, and it was not until two years after that the downward tendency of exchange became marked. There is, however, no doubt whatever that by the fall in the rupee that has since taken place, these gentlemen have incurred very great loss. It is an extremely hard fate, and I can assure the House and assure the gentlemen concerned that nobody sympathises more deeply than I do with them in the loss—the unexpected loss—which many of them have sustained by the fall of the rupee. But they are not the only persons who have suffered by the fall of the rupee. If you were going in the excess of your generosity to make a proposal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he should make good the losses of these gentlemen, then you would at least be spending your own money. But because these gentlemen have incurred a loss, expected neither by themselves nor by the Government of India at the time when this agreement was made, what right have you to say that you will compel the taxpayers of India to make this good? Really in this debate I have listened with surprise, particularly to the hon. Member opposite, who has spoken as if the Secretary of State were some wealthy plutocrat, denying the just demands of the people upon the huge stores of gold and silver over which he had command. He talked about his having gained the sum of 23,000 rupees out of these gentlemen's pockets. We have not gained a single sixpence. The taxpayer in India is not one penny the richer because of the fall in the rupee. He has had to pay in salaries all the rupees these gentlemen engaged for; he has had to pay in pensions every rupee stipulated for, and it is not his fault that when these rupees come to London, they have not the same purchasing power as they had at the time of the agreement. What right have you to say that it is the taxpayer of India who is to suffer the loss, who is

to give more than he undertook to give, because the rate of exchange is against him. Well, now, I do not know quite whether the hon. Member for North Kensington really puts this on justice or generosity. He used very strong words, and he said he asked for justice and nothing but justice. Let me remind him that in this country he need not come to the House of Commons for justice. The Secretary of State has made a contract. If he does not keep that contract, "the law is open, and there are 'deputies.' Let them unplead one another." The hon. Member says that no individual pensioner has sufficient wealth to go to law. But there is an association. Why does not the association, if the Secretary of State will not fulfil the contract he has made, take a case to the Courts of Law? I can undertake that no pettifogging objection shall be made. I can undertake that every facility shall be given for having the opinion of the Courts of Law upon the contract made by the Secretary of State, and that the decision once given shall be applied to every officer of the same class. But they will never take their case into Courts of Law, because they know that they have not a leg to stand on. A great deal was made about Mr. Gordon's case by the hon. Member for North Kensington. Why not take Mr. Gordon's case as a test case? I can tell the hon. Member why the Secretary of State will not pay Mr. Gordon in sterling, because Mr. Gordon only contracted at the time he made his contract for a rupee pension payable in Calcutta, and because—according to Mr. Gordon's contract—he is only entitled to draw a certain number of rupees as a pension from the Treasury of Calcutta. He draws it in London upon the express condition that he shall receive it at the official rate of exchange. But we had another particular case quoted by the hon. Member. It is a good illustration how liable the Secretary of State is to misrepresention if he does deal with a particular case. This case was misquoted and misstated by the hon. Member for North Kensington and by an hon. Gentleman from Ireland, who enlarged upon what has passed as an instance of the meanness and of the despicable and pettifogging practice of the Secretary of State for India. It was the case of an educational officer, and I am happily able to tell the House exactly what the circumstances are. The House will remember that it was put by the hon. Member for North Kensington that when the Secretary of State would not pay, this Gentleman went into the City and consulted a firm of solicitors, whereupon the Secretary of State paid £1,500 to buy off his hostility.

*SIR R. LETHBRIDGE: Not to buy off his hostility. I said it was in appreciation of this gentleman's very great and acknowledged abilities.

*SIR J. GORST: Ah, yes, that is what the hon. Member said, but only those Members who were present in the House could appreciate the tone in which it was said. It was not the words, it was the insinuation, which was correctly caught by the hon. Member for Kerry. He interpreted the hon. Member for North Kensington's tone, and translated it into actual phrases. Now, this is what the case really was. It was the case of an educational officer who came home quite recently, either last year or the year before, from Lahore. This case had nothing whatever to do with the question of the value of the rupee. The Punjaub Government had wished that this gentleman should retire, retire, and had offered special terms of retirement which they said they would propose to the Secretary of State for India. When this gentleman arrived at home the Secretary of State could not sanction the terms which the Government of the Punjaub had offered, because they were quite *ultra vires* and beyond the scale. But upon having information furnished him of a confidential character showing that the Punjaub Government had actually made the offer, and that the officer had been induced to retire upon that offer, the Secretary of State offered this substantial sum of money to settle the case. That is the special case which the Secretary of State dealt with on its merits, and this is the way the special case is made use of in the House of Commons. I hope I have said enough to the House to induce them to pause before they appoint a Committee for the purpose of dictating to the Secretary of State and to the Government of India, that they are to pay these gentlemen a pension for which they have not contracted, and to which they are not legally entitled.

The hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton, was quite right in saying I should not be surprised at his seconding the Motion. Nothing surprises me in politics; yet had I been capable of feeling the emotion of surprise, I should have felt it when I heard an hon. Member, who is celebrated throughout the country for his opposition to pensions, who will scarcely allow pensions that are due to be paid in this country, insisting that the Indian taxpayers were to pay pensions that were not legally due; when I heard an hon. Member who renders himself, at least, in this House, remarkable for his appeals to constitutional and legal principles, trying to lead the House of Commons to usurp a function of which it has carefully and expressly divested itself—that is, interference with the revenues of India. Let me remind the House of Commons that they have, by their own act, placed it out of their power to interfere with the revenues and expenditure of India. It is quite true that they have the most absolute control over the Secretary of State, but the Secretary of State himself cannot spend one single penny of the Indian revenue without the consent of the Indian Council—of men whom he cannot dismiss, of men whose actions he cannot control, and the consent of a majority of whom is absolutely essential before a single penny can be spent. When the House of Commons has, from obvious motives, and in the wisest spirit thus divested itself of the power of meddling with the revenues of India, is it constitutional, is it wise, is it legal for the House to appoint a Committee for the purpose of dictating to the Secretary of State and to the Government of India that they are to pay out of the revenues of India money which is not legally due? Well, Sir, there is one more consideration which I must submit to the House before I sit down. I was made the subject of sneers and ridicule by the hon. Member for Northampton, who represents the educated, English-speaking, and ambitious class of Indian natives, because I ventured in the House of Commons last year to say that I stood up as the representative of the poor taxpayers. Well, I stand up as the representative of the poor taxpayers again. If there is one person in this House whose duty it is to ever be mindful of the rights and of the interests of the poor taxpayers of India it is the person who in this House represents the Secretary of State for India. I think it would have a bad moral effect if the only interference, the only direct interference of the House of Commons in the affairs of India were to be the appointment of a Committee to exact more money from the Indian taxpayers, to be spent in London, to be paid in London, and to go into the pockets of Englishmen. I know something of that agitation with which the hon. Member for Northampton is connected. I know that one of the complaints they make—it may be right or it may be wrong—is of the great drain upon the resources of India by reason of the enormous sums which they already have to pay in this country. Remember that India not only has to pay the interest upon her debt, she has to pay the interest upon large sums of money borrowed for the construction of her railways; she has to pay for the English Army in India; she has to pay for the establishment of the India Office; she has to pay for an immense amount of stores which are purchased in this country; and all these payments, for which rupees have to be collected from the taxpayers of India, have to be made in sterling, and for every payment so made an extra 50 per cent has to be extracted from the Indian taxpayer to make up the amount. The Secretary of State has struggled, and is struggling now, to reduce the sum to the minimum, and any interference on the part of the House of Commons of the description proposed would thwart the Secretary of State. You may depend upon it there is every desire on the part of Her Majesty's Government to place the civil servants of India in such a position as to make them contented and happy. There is every disposition, as soon as the new order of things is created, to review in a generous spirit the position of the existing officers, and to bring them as early as possible under the new conditions. There is a determination to deal not only honestly, but generously, with individual cases, and where any officer can show that by the exceptional character of his agreement he is entitled to be paid in sterling, in sterling we shall pay him. But the Secretary of

State, unless compelled by the House of Commons, will not exact additional taxes from the people of India in order to pay gentlemen in England sums of money that are not due to them.

*MR. KING (Kingston-upon-Hull, Central): It must, Sir, be admitted that anyone, especially an almost untried Member like myself, is placed at some disadvantage in following so accomplished a rhetorician as the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for India, and I think that if the mover and seconder of this Resolution deserve nothing else, they surely deserve the thanks of the House for having extracted the speech we have just heard from the hon. Gentleman. He is always so eloquent, his periods are always so incisive, and his imagination is above all so fertile that it is a matter of delight to all his friends whenever he can be persuaded to get upon his legs in this House. But when my hon. Friend breaks from his reserve, and lets us into the secrets of his sanctuary, furnishing us with revelations from the proceedings of the India Office, he affords us an additional pleasure, and we must all not only envy him his office, but congratulate him on his escape from the toils of the Uncovenanted Circe, like another Sampson who has got free from his Delilah. But when he wants to prohibit canvassing by the members of the Service, he forgets that to them it is a matter of hunger and starvation—that they cannot educate their children nor keep up their insurance—and that pinched as they are in their old age, they cannot help appealing to their friends to lend them a helping hand. The poor taxpayer argument is one that we have all heard before; in fact, the speech of my hon. Friend might almost be stereotyped for future use, because I warn him that this is not the last time he will hear of this subject or that an attempt will be made to get the House of Commons to inquire into it. On this occasion my hon. Friend divides the Service into two. He speaks of the existing men in the Service, and also of the pensioners, but he specially avoided any specific allusion to the latter except to promise special attention to any special case, a promise which I am afraid will very seldom be found to be of any great advantage. The hon. Gentleman can only offer to allow these persons to take any case they like into Court, but will he also undertake that their acquiescence will not be in bar pleaded? I do not intend to take up much of the time of the House at so late an hour, but as the House is aware of the interest I take in this subject, I hope I may be allowed to refer to one or two points, which, I think, may tend to put upon the matter a somewhat different complexion to that which it has been made to assume in the speech of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary. The hon. Gentleman is fond of going over the argument that up to 1862 the pensions were only paid in India, and that then a special arrangement was made as to how pensions were to be payable in this country. I have here a Return which I myself moved for, but before going into it, I may say that I believe the pensions of the Uncovenanted Service were in more cases than one up to the year 1862 paid in sterling. The Return which I have here shows that upwards of 150 of the Uncovenanted civil servants were drawing in sterling in this country, and in reference to this matter I should like to read to the House an extract from the despatch of the old Court of Directors of the East India Company, dated the 28th February, 1855. And here I must first ask the House to remember that the existing pensioners, or at any rate most of them, must have entered the service about that time, because 30 years is about the period of service an Uncovenanted civilian has to fulfil, five years being allowed for furlough. Well, at that time the despatch written to India said—

"You have also brought to our notice that the pension rules of 1831 appear to require some amendment, especially in regard to the cases of highly paid appointments of from £1,000 to £2,400 per annum, the occupants of which appointments, if invalided after 30 years' service, are entitled under the present rule to receive a half pension varying from £500 to £1,200 per annum, whereas the Covenanted servant, after 25 years' service, receives a pension from the Government of only £500 per annum in any case. In the above particular we concur in thinking the present rate to be defective, and we desire that a clause be introduced providing (as respects persons hereinafter appointed to the service) that in no case shall a larger pension than £400 per annum be granted to Un-

covenanted servants receiving salaries above that amount; whether the retirement be from ill-health (after either 20 or 30 years' service) or without a medical certificate after 35 years' service, under the authority conveyed in the despatch of May 5th, 1854, No. 18. With reference to your suggestion that you should receive authority to make a general revision of the pension rule, we shall be ready promptly to consider the subject of any further alterations to be made, until they shall have been sanctioned by us."

Again, in accordance with the despatch, above quoted, the Government of India published a Resolution under date May 19th, 1855, to the effect

"That in no case (as respects persons hereinafter appointed to the Uncovenanted Service) shall a larger pension than £400 or Rs.4,000 per annum be granted to Uncovenanted servants receiving salaries of Rs.750 to Rs.1,000 a month, nor a larger pension than £500 or Rs.5,000 per annum to Uncovenanted servants receiving salaries above that amount, whether the retirement be from ill-health (after either twenty or thirty years' services) or without a medical certificate after thirty-five years' service."

Now, there is not one syllable in that despatch as to rupees or exchange except the deliberate promise of £500 per annum to those who come in after the 28th February, 1855, those who were in service before the 28th February, 1855, being entitled to half-pay. The case of Mr. Forjet shows that the India Office admits the accuracy of this statement. On the 25th March, 1862, the Government of Bombay wrote to the Secretary of State the following letter:—

"Mr. Forjet, it appears, has served the Government continuously for upwards of 35 years, and his conduct during that period has been uniformly good. . . . He is therefore entitled, in accordance with the 9th paragraph of the Orders of the Court of Directors of the 5th May, 1854, No. 18, to a pension of 600 rupees a month, or £720 per annum, being half of his salary during the last five years of his service."

This shows that Mr. Forjet was at least allowed to draw £720 per annum. Now, in regard to what has been said with reference to the Public Service Commission, the fact has already been alluded to that that Commission was expressly prohibited from inquiring into the grievances of the Uncovenanted servants, and therefore it is unfair to say that those grievances were considered by them. I must here repeat that all we are asking for is an inquiry. I cannot enter much further into the arguments in favour of this proposal as it would be impossible within the limits of the time now at our disposal to deal with this subject in all its bearings. I have shown that in one particular case in which a man had an undoubted claim to the service, he succeeded in getting it, but there are 12 other gentlemen who are now pensioners who have petitioned the Secretary of State in reference to their claims. Those petitions have been referred to the Government of India, and have, of course, been duly pigeon-holed, no redress being apparently permissible. This is the way in which the promise to consider individual cases appears to be carried out. I am speaking with perfect accuracy when I say that these cases were on all fours with Mr. Forjet's case. Those gentlemen who were in the service prior to 1855 are most assuredly entitled to sterling pensions.

SIR JOHN GORST: I would remind the hon. Gentleman that that case has not been brought forward before, but I may add that a despatch was sent to the Government of India recommending the desirability of dealing with the case as expeditiously as possible.

*MR. KING: That is what I was saying. I will now only say in conclusion that we who support this Resolution believe a Committee of this House would be a fair and impartial tribunal, and we shall have no fear whatever in going before it. If that Committee should decide against us, we will accept its decision, and in that way you may end the question—end a very dangerous agitation which is now injuring the public service of India and sapping the good feeling and loyalty of the Civil Service in that part of the world. Such an inquiry seems to me to be in every way desirable, and I cannot understand on what grounds my hon. Friend refuses it. The hon. Gentleman says he has a good case. We are asking him to listen to the appeal of our fellow citizens in India. We are sorry they cannot appear at the Bar of the House of Commons. No employer of labour finds it desirable or safe to disregard his pledges to his employés, and certainly no just employer can reasonably refuse to examine into the grievances of those he employs. These Uncovenanted civil servants appear before the House of

Commons, through us, and ask for an inquiry with a view to the redress of their grievances. They are unable to appear here in person, but they could appear before a Committee up stairs; and I say it is the duty of the House, under the Act by which the Government of India was transferred from the East India Company to Her Majesty's Government, not to shrink from the responsibility which is here involved, but at once to enter upon the investigations now humbly asked for.

MR. H. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I have considerable sympathy with the Motion of my hon. Friend behind me, for it forms part of a much larger question which I hope, before many days have elapsed, we may have an opportunity of discussing. Two things appear manifest from the Debate, that the Uncovenanted servants have a substantial grievance, and that they are not likely to get much from Her Majesty's Government on this occasion, to judge from the speech of the Under Secretary for India, who said that nothing could be done until the plan now under the consideration of the Indian Council was settled. But what is this plan and when will it be produced? When are these unfortunate civil servants to expect to derive any advantages from it? Certainly my hon. Friend professed a desire to assist these officials, but he also said that he had regard for the taxpayers, and could not at their expense give this relief. I confess these references of my hon. Friend to the interest of the Indian taxpayers fill me with rejoicing. What is the present position of the taxpayer in India? What is the special, enormous grievance from which he is now suffering? To understand this the House must remember that India owes an enormous sum which has to be paid in gold. It amounts to fifteen millions a year, and the whole revenue out of which the sum is paid is collected in silver. What is the meaning of that? Now that the rupee is only worth 1s. 4d. instead of something approaching 2s., which was formerly its value, it takes an enormously increased revenue to meet the debt of 15 millions, which India is bound to pay to us every year. If the Government and Parliament of this country could see its way to grappling with this larger question to which I have referred, one of the immediate results would be that the Government would not only get rid at once of a grievance of the Uncovenanted Civil Service, but they would be able to relieve the taxpayer in India, for whom my hon. Friend has professed such enormous interest, of taxation to the extent of something like six millions a year. I think that recent inquiries into this subject have produced a good deal of evidence, showing indisputably that the Uncovenanted civil servants of India have a grievance in this direction, and unless the Government can see its way to favourably considering our views on the wider subject to which I have referred, I confess I cannot understand the objections which are raised to the appointment of another Committee to inquire into this subject. The Under Secretary for India says the only result of such a Committee if its views proved unfavourable to my hon. Friend, would be to impose further burdens on the unfortunate taxpayers of India. I do not agree with him; I do not see the least necessity for such an outcome of the inquiry. On the contrary, on referring to the terms of my hon. Friend's Motion, what do I find? He moves:—

"That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that a Select Committee should be appointed to inquire into the grievances of the Members of the Indian Uncovenanted Civil Services, with special reference to their pension and leave rules, and to the effect produced by the fall in the gold value of silver on their family remittances, their leave allowances, and their provision for old age."

Now, I think it is more than likely that the result of such an inquiry would be not to impose further taxation, but to supplement and support the recommendations of one-half of the Royal Commission on Gold and Silver, and thereby assist in the settlement of this and other important questions.

The House divided:—Ayes, 122; Noes, 86.—(Division List, No. 136.)

MERCHANT SHIPPING PILOTAGE BILL (No. 243).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this Bill be read a second time."

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: This is a Bill embodying some of the recommendations of a large and representative Com-

mittee of the House which carefully inquired into the subject. Controversial points have been left out of this Bill, which is, among other matters, intended to secure the better representation of pilots on Pilotage Boards, and to deal with their friendly and sick funds so as to secure better management.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Can the right hon. Gentleman assure us that the Bill does not contain these provisions to which such serious objection was taken last year by hon. Members on this side of the House?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I can assure the hon. Member that the Bill does not raise those controversial points.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

DIVORCE (ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND) BILL (No. 14).

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this Bill be now read a second time."

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I do not think a Bill of this kind should be introduced without explanation and at this hour of the night, and I therefore beg to move the Adjournment of the Debate.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now Adjourned."

MR. W. H. HUNTER (Aberdeen): This is a one clause Bill. I ought to mention to the House that I was fortunate in the ballot in drawing an early place. I intended putting the Bill down for the 27th March, but by a verbal mistake I gave in the date as the 27th April, and therefore lost the opportunity I should otherwise have had of getting the Bill debated. I would suggest that as the Bill is of one clause only, it would be possible to read it at once and debate the principle in Committee, otherwise I fear it will have to stand over to another year.

Debate adjourned till Tuesday, 18th June, at Two of the clock.

LAW CLERKS (IRELAND) BILL (No. 180).

Order for Second Reading, read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, N.): I hope the House will assent to the Second Reading of this Bill.

MR. MADDEN: I do not think that this is a Bill which can be read a second time without discussion. I think the object of it should be explained to the House. As the right hon. Gentleman must be aware, it makes a very considerable change in the existing state of the law as regards a very important Irish profession. I believe that Irish solicitors themselves are of opinion that the provisions of this Bill should not be assented to. I beg to move the adjournment of the Debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."

MR. CONYBEARE: I must say I think we have a right to congratulate the hon. and learned Serjeant on the successful manner in which he has wasted several minutes of the time of the House. I think it is a great achievement of the party of law and order.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not speaking to the Motion.

MR. SEXTON: I have only to say that the Bill is an extremely simple one; it is only intended to make more easy admission to the profession of solicitors. I do not think the body of solicitors are opposing it. Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman take from me an assurance that if the Bill is read a second time now we will give a favourable reception to any Amendments he may suggest?

MR. MADDEN: I can only speak again by the indulgence of the House; but I would like to point out that the Solicitors Bill deals with this as well as other important questions, and it appears to me it will be better to deal with this subject when in Committee on the Solicitors Bill.

Debate adjourned till Monday next.

DISPENSARY HOUSES (IRELAND) ACT (1879) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 120).

Order for Committee read.

It being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at One o'clock till Monday next.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 15.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [JUNE 19.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 3rd June, 1889.

LORD ASHTOWN'S AND LORD DUNALLEY'S CLAIMS TO VOTE FOR REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND.

Ordered, and directed,

That a Certificate be sent by the Clerk of the Parliaments to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, stating that the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom has reported to the House of Lords that the right of the Lord Ashtown and the Lord Dunalley to vote at the elections of Representative Peers of Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of him the said Lord Chancellor; and that the House of Lords has ordered such Reports to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland; and it is hereby also Ordered, That the said Reports of the said Lord Chancellor be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

The Lord Plunket—Took the Oath.

CAPE COLONY—RETIREMENT OF SIR HERCULES ROBINSON.

QUESTIONS—OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, seeing the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies in his place, I wish to ask him a question with reference to a statement which appears in the public Press this morning. It is stated that it is not probable that Sir Hercules Robinson will return as Governor to the Cape. I wish to ask the noble Lord whether there is any truth in the statement?

*LORD KNUTSFORD: My Lords, it is true that Sir H. Robinson has decided to retire, and that Her Majesty's Government have accepted that resignation. Questions requiring very careful consideration have lately arisen in South Africa, and Her Majesty's Government desired to learn from Sir H. Robinson himself his views upon these and other subjects. Sir Hercules Robinson came over and has stated to me his general views, and they will shortly be brought under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government. It is evident that Her Majesty's Government could not immediately, and without the full consideration which the importance of the case demands, give that assurance of concurrence and support which he desired. I gladly take this opportunity of expressing to your Lordships the deep sense which Her Majesty's Government entertain of the very exceptional and valuable services which Sir H. Robinson has rendered during his prolonged tenure of office at the Cape. By his able administration of other important colonies he has earned a high and well-deserved reputation, and by his services to the Cape Colony and, indeed, I may say the whole of South Africa, he has not only maintained but added to that reputation. Perhaps I may be allowed to add that in the settlement of the questions under consideration, it will be especially the desire of Her Majesty's Government to maintain those friendly and cordial relations with the South African Republic and the Orange Free State which Sir H. Robinson did so much to secure.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, I was not aware until I came into the House this moment that this important question had been raised, and in ordinary circumstances I certainly should have preferred to remain silent. But inasmuch as Parliament rises in 24 hours, and as the subject is one of such great moment, I feel it would not be right to refrain from

making a few observations on the subject. If your Lordships think, however, that I may be out of order in doing so, I shall put myself in order by moving the adjournment of the House. I heard with pleasure the remarks which my noble Friend, the Colonial Secretary, made with reference to Sir Hercules Robinson's past career. He did not, in my opinion, express too strongly the praise which is due to that eminent public servant. For 47 years Sir H. Robinson has discharged successfully all the most important duties that can fall to the lot of a Colonial Governor. He has had tasks placed upon him from which most men would flinch. He has accomplished them with admirable judgment, capacity, and loyalty to the Crown. He carries with him into retirement an unblemished character; and I say deliberately that I know no one in the ranks of the Colonial Service who is more entitled to the highest eulogies that can be passed upon him than is Sir Hercules Robinson. But there is something more than this. He united to success in administration a special and exceptional knowledge of South African affairs. I venture to say that there is no man living who is so well qualified to speak, who is so intimately familiar with that network of difficult politics which exist in South Africa; and he has succeeded partly by his wide knowledge, partly by capacity, partly by character in inspiring a sense of confidence in the Government, in the Parliament, in the people of South Africa, and also in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. My noble Friend, the Colonial Secretary, touched very lightly indeed upon the reasons which had induced Sir H. Robinson to retire, and knowing, as I do, those reasons, judging of them also from that which is public property—the telegram which has appeared in the newspapers—I do not think I shall be acting fairly by Sir H. Robinson if I do not point out to your Lordships that the reason why he retires is not so much that his policy should be considered here at home, as it is that Her Majesty's Government, as I understand, distinctly refuse to give an assurance of that support without which he cannot return to his arduous duties. My Lords, the telegram which appeared in this morning's papers distinctly stated that, and I do not think the Colonial Secretary will for a moment attempt to qualify it. The words of the telegram are to the effect that inasmuch as Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to give an assurance that they agree with and are prepared to give support to Sir H. Robinson, on those grounds he has felt it to be his duty to retire. It is a very serious matter, my Lords. I do not know that there has been anything in Colonial politics for many years that is altogether more grave or possibly pregnant with more serious results. Sir H. Robinson came home to discuss his position. Her Majesty's Government tell him, as I understand, that they are not prepared to acquiesce in his views, or to support him. What is the policy which is thus, I was going to say, indirectly, but I will say, emphatically, disapproved? My Lords, there has been, I perceive, in some of the public prints a misunderstanding as to particular phrases and terms in Sir H. Robinson's speech when he left Cape Town amid an ovation—there is no other word for it—of all classes and sections of the community; there has been some misunderstanding here in England as to the precise value of some of the words he used, and which the English people have naturally misunderstood, but which are perfectly well known to colonial ears. The policy which Sir H. Robinson enunciated in that speech, I say deliberately, was an old policy, a policy that had been pursued for years; certainly pursued during the whole tenure of office of my noble Friend the Colonial Secretary. It was a policy which had received his sanction and the sanction of Her Majesty's Government; it was one which I cannot conceive being called in question as containing any new or doubtful elements. My Lords, the policy was simply this. It was the policy of responsible Government, the acceptance of responsible Government in its fulness, as against some theory of establishing Crown colonies in the centre of South Africa, Crown colonies cut off from the sea, Crown colonies with which we can have no connection except through responsible Governments, Crown colonies, in fact, which would have to depend absolutely for their very existence upon those responsible Governments. My Lords, though there are many outlying

districts in that part of South Africa which for a time it may be necessary to govern as Crown colonies—it is reasonable, it is necessary, that they should perhaps be so governed, some as Crown colonies, some as protectorates, some as falling within the sphere of Imperial influence—I challenge any man to read the speech of Sir H. Robinson and to doubt that, when he spoke of those Colonies, he did not mean that they were to be absorbed immediately, but that in the fulness of time and when the occasion came they would ultimately devolve upon Cape Colony. That is my view; that is the belief of every man who knows the subject; and Sir H. Robinson distinctly so stated. My Lords, my noble Friend the Colonial Secretary has stated in the few remarks he has made that the idea of Her Majesty's Government is that they must consider maturely the policy of Sir H. Robinson. I think my noble Friend when he advanced a doctrine of that kind can hardly have reflected upon what he said.

*LORD KNUTSFORD: I did not say that that was the idea of Her Majesty's Government; what I said was that grave questions had lately arisen in South Africa, and that the Government desired to have the opinion of Sir H. Robinson upon them.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: Then, my Lords, I must ask on what ground is it that this experienced administrator, this successful Colonial Governor, is disapproved? Because Her Majesty's Government, in the words of the telegram, if it is correct, will neither acquiesce in his policy nor support him in South Africa. I do not think my noble Friend or any one else can explain this apparent inconsistency. There is a great deal to be said on this matter, much more (for it is an immense subject) than I can trouble your Lordships with this evening. I shall, however, deliberately and distinctly assert three things at this moment—first of all, whatever be the result of the deliberations of Her Majesty's Government, whosoever they may choose to go out to South Africa to succeed Sir H. Robinson must pursue the same course of policy which he has pursued and which he has enunciated. No one who knew anything of this matter and went out with different views would be other than insane, for he would be setting himself in direct opposition to the Colonial Government and Parliament; he would go to certain defeat; and whatever others less familiar with this question may think, the Colonial Secretary knows enough to understand that I am speaking the indisputable truth. Secondly, he must not only go prepared to carry out the policy of his disapproved predecessor, but he must be prepared to enunciate publicly that he agrees with Sir H. Robinson and is prepared to carry out that policy. My Lords, if that be so, men will ask again why you sent out a successor who is to be identified with that very policy which you are now directly disapproving, and why you do not send out the man who has been more than any other identified with the politics of South Africa? Thirdly, whoever goes out, however high his attainments or his position, will have to meet this difficulty—he will find it extremely hard to persuade the people, the Government, the Parliament of Cape Colony, the two Dutch communities of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, that he goes *bonâ fide* to carry out the policy which I say has been indirectly condemned here. My Lords, I am exceedingly sorry to find this fault. My noble Friend the Colonial Secretary will do me the justice to admit that I have never been fond of fault-finding, and I have on more than one occasion suppressed my opinions out of deference to my noble Friend when I have disagreed in certain measures that were taken. But, my Lords, we are now on the verge of very dangerous troubles which may become most grave if they are augmented by any mismanagement here at home; and I should consider myself wrong if I did not on this, almost the last occasion which offers, to the best of my ability signal the perils which I see ahead.

*THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I was not in my place at the beginning of this discussion, but I believe I am right in saying that the noble Lord at the head of the Colonial Office announced that Sir H. Robinson has resigned.

*LORD KNUTSFORD: Yes.

*THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I could not allow this opportunity to pass without expressing my sen se also, as the noble Earl has done, of the very high public services which have

been rendered to this country and South Africa by Sir H. Robinson. It was my lot to advise Her Majesty to send Sir H. Robinson to South Africa in circumstances of extraordinary difficulty; though this is happily not an occasion when I need recall to your Lordships the controversies which arose and the difficulties and calamities which developed during the period which preceded his appointment. Whatever may have been the opinions as to the policy then pursued, I think there is no difference as to the manner in which Sir H. Robinson carried into effect that policy. He had to conduct the negotiations for the final arrangements with the Transvaal in which he displayed a moderation, tact, good sense, and loyalty to the Government at home beyond all praise. Since that time Sir H. Robinson, during many years, has presided over the Government of Cape Colony—a Government which my noble Friend the Colonial Secretary will, I am sure, agree with me is the most difficult Government under the British Crown; and he performed that arduous task with such signal success that on leaving the colony he had, what is without precedent, the universal approval of all classes of the colonists over whom he has been Governor. Now, having said so much, I cannot refrain from adding something with reference to the grave subject touched upon by the noble Lord opposite. The very eminence of the man who has resigned, the very success of his policy, the very unanimity with which that policy has been approved in South Africa, renders the situation one of peculiar gravity, and it is most unfortunate, if it be so, that on this occasion there is likely to be disagreement between the colonists and the Government at home. My Lords, I have read, as I suppose all interested in colonial affairs have read, the speech of Sir H. Robinson delivered before his departure. Without pledging myself to every detail of that speech, in the main lines of it I absolutely and entirely concur. I do not think that wiser or more weighty words have been spoken about South Africa for many years. And delivered at such a time, to such people from such a man, I trust indeed that before Her Majesty's Government depart widely from the policy indicated by that speech they will consider, not once, but many times. No man can be more sensible than I am, or has more reason to be sensible, of the difficulties attending the government of Cape Colony; and I have no desire to say anything which may aggravate the difficulties which always exist for Her Majesty's Government in these matters. But I think it would be wrong not to say a few words upon the general policy of the Government with regard to South African affairs. My Lords, I have seen latterly in this country an agitation and a movement arising which I believe to be based on entirely wrong principles. It has for its aim the establishment of some kind of British dominion apart, distinct, and free from the government of the colonies. I do not believe that there could be a more grievous mistake than to imagine that where you have a large number of white colonists, energetic, industrious, and independent, you can withdraw from them that natural opportunity of expansion which the colony presents. Who is it that has made South Africa what it is? It is not the Imperial Government, but the colonists themselves, and they will insist and succeed in reaping the harvest. If you thwart them you will make government impossible. If you act in concert with them you may consolidate the union between them and the mother country. But if you seek to establish side by side with them dependencies which are conducted on lines absolutely different from those on which they conduct their government, you will certainly be involved with these colonies in difficulties which can only end in their independence. Cape Colony is a colony in which we have a double interest—an interest not merely on account of the value of the territory which the colony comprises, and the great future which, as I believe, it has before it, but because it is an essential post on the way to India. It behoves us, therefore, to be extremely cautious how we do anything to alienate the white colonists in that part of the Empire. I know well that in many respects the past in South Africa has been unfortunate; but I had hoped that, after all the storms and calamities, there was now a reasonable prospect of a gradual subsidence of the old difficulties, and a gradual coming together of the colonists among themselves; and I

had hoped that the colony was working harmoniously with the Government at home with a view to strengthen the existing colony and prepare for a gradual union with the outlying dominions. My Lords, I should be the last to ask the Government to act precipitately; I entirely approve of our giving for a time assistance to those territories outside the colonies from home. As I understood the purport of Sir H. Robinson's speech, it was not that he wished Bechuanaland or any of the other territories to be at once handed over to Cape Colony—for that would not be advantageous to the colony or to the territory—but only that he protested against a new departure which should be based upon the ground that we should establish separate Crown colonies, or whatever else they might be called, independent of the old colonies. I will not detain your Lordships further; but I did not think that it was right on an occasion of so serious a character not to express freely and without reserve the opinion I have formed upon this important question.

*LORD KNUTSFORD: I only desire to make a few observations, as it would be manifestly impossible and, indeed, improper for me to enter at the present moment into a discussion on the policy to be observed in South Africa. What I desire to say most strongly is that I do not know what the noble Earl means when he talks of Her Majesty's Government having expressed emphatic disapproval of the policy of Sir H. Robinson. No such disapproval has been expressed or implied. Indeed, as regards one part of that policy, I expressed but a few minutes ago entire approval, and I distinctly stated that Her Majesty's Government desired to keep up those friendly relations with the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State which Sir H. Robinson has done so much to form. So far as I have spoken, and so far as I have stated the view of Her Majesty's Government, there has been no disapproval, expressed or implied, of the policy that Sir H. Robinson followed; but, as I have pointed out, new questions of importance have arisen. It was desired to have the opinion of Sir H. Robinson on those and other questions, and I have no doubt that the speech which he delivered on leaving the Cape will come under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government. But Her Majesty's Government could not at once arrive at a determination on those questions; and, therefore, when we were asked for an immediate assurance of complete concurrence in the views of Sir H. Robinson and a promise to support him should he return to South Africa, we were not in a position to give that assurance at once. I must remind your Lordships that Sir H. Robinson has not been recalled; he has retired of his own free will, before we were able to consider the questions brought before us. I repeat that what has passed is not to be taken as a disapproval by Her Majesty's Government of the policy which has hitherto been pursued in South Africa.

DEFENCES OF THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

LORD LAMINGTON: My Lords, I rise pursuant to notice to ask Her Majesty's Government whether, having undertaken to assist the maritime defence of the Australian Colonies, it may not be desirable to revert to the former system of sending a small number of Imperial troops to each of these Colonies. My Lords, I think I am justified in saying that the policy of Her Majesty's Government in assisting the Australian Colonies in their maritime defence has given universal satisfaction. It is another link added to those which previously bound those Colonies to the mother country. There is nothing so remarkable as the close interest which has been taken in the Colonies by the people of this country of late years. The Colonial Exhibition in London was one of the most successful I think of any of the Exhibitions we have had, and it testified to the rapid growth and development of the Australian Colonies especially. My Lords, we know how great an interest is taken in the colonial industries, and in the development, moral and physical, of the Colonies. Germany, France, and other Powers, are now endeavouring to establish colonies in the Pacific, and it is necessary that measures should be taken to provide for the defence of our Colonies against the contingency of war breaking out. Steps have been taken in reference to their maritime protection, but their

land defences also demand attention. Until 1870 there was always a certain limited number of Imperial troops in the Australian Colonies. In consequence of the Maori War in New Zealand, the troops there, which were numerous—amounting in 1864 to as many as 10,336 men—were recalled; and it was no doubt a wise policy to withdraw them, and leave the colonists to carry on such wars themselves. Their presence caused the colonists to carry on wars with the Maoris; or, at all events, those wars ceased when the troops were withdrawn. In Australia, however, in 1860, there were only 1,695 troops; in 1861, 1,044; in 1862, 1,154; in 1863, 1,000; in 1864, 369; in 1865, 405; in 1866, 359; in 1867, 1,651; in 1868, 1,901; and in 1869, 994. Those were the numbers of our soldiers there at those dates, and the colonists had to pay £40 per head for them. I think we should have paid for them ourselves. I do not think we should make the colonists pay for the support we give them by the Queen's troops. On that subject a gentleman who was a Governor of one of our greatest Colonies, and a most exemplary Governor too, wrote to me to this effect:—

"It should be represented to the Colonies that, in view of the changed circumstances since the opening of the Pacific Railroad, the re-instatement of the English garrisons in the five capitals of Australia would fill up the gap now existing in the military connection between England and her vast Colonies. Thus, Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, India, Ceylon, Singapore, Hong Kong, by extending the line to Australia, and *viâ* Vancouver to Quebec. It could be further represented to them that the occupation of territory in the Pacific is now seriously engaging the attention of foreign Powers, and that any combination of them in the event of a European war might seriously menace their security, which could only be saved from danger by the maintenance of a military force."

That is on the very high authority of a gentleman who has filled the position of Governor of a most important colony. I should like to take this opportunity of calling the attention of my noble Friend to the position of the Government on one very important point. As regards the position of Governors, I would ask the Colonial Secretary to consider the expediency of placing the Colonial Service as respects pensions on the same footing as the Diplomatic Service. Until 1868, strange to say, no Governor was entitled to any pension, and gentlemen who had filled those important posts often came home perfectly destitute. It was left to myself, a private Member, to introduce a Governors' Pension Bill. And by that Bill, at whatever age a Governor might retire and become entitled to a pension, he could not enjoy it until he was 60. That Act was amended by the Act of 1872, and the Colonial Secretary has a discretionary power to grant pensions at an earlier age; but the original limitation exists, and I think that ought to be altered, for it is surely as important a position as representing Her Majesty in a great Court, and many of our Colonial Governors are as distinguished as our most eminent diplomatists. I need not say, that as regards sending troops to the Colonies, nothing should be done without the Colonies being consulted. With regard to the question of expense, to ask for any payment from the Colonies is not to be thought of. Why should they pay? We do not ask them to pay for the ships employed on the Australian station. It is for our advantage to have troops there, and it is well to remember that the Colonies are more important to England than England to the Colonies. They should be treated not as possessions, but as a part of Great Britain. We must not forget how much the Colonies have done for their own defence. Let us act in the spirit New South Wales acted in towards us, when, under the administration of that distinguished statesman, Mr. W. Dalley, they did us such noble service by despatching the Soudan contingent. I trust the Government will express their readiness to meet the wishes of the Colonies if they desire to have an Imperial force stationed among them. A small force would suffice, and the expense would be very small—not so much as the subsidy proposed to be given to the Canadian railways. This, my Lords, is a time when, in the language of a most illustrious personage in a remarkable speech, we must show our sympathy with our brethren beyond the seas who are no less dear to us than if they lived in Surrey or in Kent. That is my reason for taking the present opportunity of bringing forward this question, and of asking the Government whether they will not consider the expediency of

again sending out a small number of Her Majesty's troops to each of the Australian Colonies?

*LORD KNUTSFORD: I am sure your Lordships will regret to hear that Lord Harris, who if he had been present would have answered the question on the part of the War Office, is unfortunately too ill to be in his place. It is understood that in your Lordships' House a certain amount of latitude is allowed in the putting of questions; but I was not prepared to find the question of the pensioning of Governors introduced in a speech which raised for consideration the question whether Imperial troops should be sent to the Australian Colonies. I will, however, undertake to look into the matter and see how it stands. The question of having Imperial troops in the Colonies had been well considered. In 1869 and 1870 a final decision was arrived at to withdraw Imperial troops from the Australian Colonies. That decision was arrived at in pursuance of a well-considered policy which was intended to be complete and final. It was in accordance with a policy that had been marked out with respect to Canada so long ago as 1851 by Earl Grey, and again by the Duke of Newcastle in 1853. The troops were withdrawn in 1869 and 1870; and there was printed at the time a despatch by Earl Granville of the 19th of May, 1870, which set forth the reasons for the withdrawal of the troops, and contained the offer on the part of Her Majesty's Government of the services of British officers in the organization of local troops to take place of those that were withdrawn. In 1875, about five years after the withdrawal of our troops, there was received from the Colony of Victoria an inquiry as to the conditions upon which Her Majesty's Government would be prepared again to send troops to the Colony. I gather that my noble Friend the Earl of Carnarvon, who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies, was not disinclined to meet the views of the Colonial Government; but, after a correspondence with the War Office, it was found that there was great difficulty in settling conditions, as at that time it was not found easy to raise recruits, and the matter was finally dropped. I may remark further that opinion in the colony upon the question was not unanimous, and the inhabitants of that colony were much divided as to the desirability of again having Imperial troops there. Since that time very great progress has been made in Australia in matters connected with defence. This was one of the good results that was anticipated by Earl Granville when he finally decided upon withdrawing our troops. He anticipated—and his anticipations have been realized—that the colonists would exhibit a spirit of self-reliance, and would show that they desired to defend themselves and were capable of doing so. The adoption of defensive measures has been watched with interest and sympathy by successive Governments at home, who have always been ready to assist the Colonies in any way they could, and to let them have the aid of British officers in organizing their troops. At this time there are in the Australian forces 1,593 officers, 28,419 infantry, 2,475 horses, and 107 field guns. These figures show what progress the Australian Colonies have made in providing for their own defence by land. I am unable to agree with what the noble Lord said as to the inexpediency of our requiring payment for any troops we might provide, as I hold that we should be right to demand such payment. I believe, however, that if the Imperial Government were prepared to send troops to Australia upon being paid for them the Colonies would decline to accept them; they would not be prepared to pay the great cost such an arrangement would entail, as well as to keep up their own defences. As I have before said, they maintain land forces of an excellent stamp, only requiring a perfected organization to secure the benefits of combined action. There may be good grounds for sending a small body of Imperial troops to the Colonies upon payment being made for them; but it is hardly worth while to discuss the question, or on what conditions financial and military they would be sent, until the Colonies make a request to have them sent. If there came a general request from the Australian Colonies that troops should be sent there again, Her Majesty's Government would not be indisposed to consider that request, provided the necessary conditions, pecuniary and military, could be agreed to; but I am bound to say that

without strong pressure from the Australian Colonies, Her Majesty's Government would think it undesirable to depart from the settled policy which has been accepted by all parties; and which has been treated as settled by the Royal Commission over which the Earl of Carnarvon presided; and which has had the good effect already pointed out of establishing strong local forces in the Colonies.

*The Earl of KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I should not have made any remark if I had not observed that the noble Lord said if there came a strong pressure from the Colonies that we should send out a certain number of our soldiers, that request would be considered. Of course, any request coming from the Colonies ought to be considered; but the circumstances should be very peculiar to justify us in reconsidering the policy we have adopted. Quite apart from the wishes of the Colonies, there are strong reasons why we should maintain our present system. Our Army is by no means too large for the duties it has to perform. We have a difficulty, sometimes serious, in keeping up our regiments at the strength necessary for foreign service. If we sent any troops to the Colonies we must maintain them at a respectable strength, for nothing can produce a worse impression than scattering handfuls of troops here and there, and a departure from our present system would increase that difficulty. Of course, if our Colonies were not willing to take any share in their own defences—an assumption which cannot be made—the case would be different; but, happily, no such state of things exists. I can hardly conceive a better system than one which encourages the Colonies to provide for their own protection with such assistance from home by way of advice as they may require. My Lords, I do not agree with the noble Lord in another remark he made, that we owe a great deal to our Colonies, but that they owe nothing to us, or that they are more important to us than we to them. Whilst I do not undervalue sentiment as a bond of union, I rely more on self-interest, and I believe there are very strong reasons why the Colonies should desire to remain connected with this country. We can afford them naval protection which they could not adequately provide for themselves, and we may fairly leave them to their own efforts by land.

Lord NORTON: My Lords, I think it would be a great mistake to deal with the Colonies as if they were dependencies. What the colonists want at this moment is to be treated on an equality with other British subjects of Her Majesty. If colonists are to be treated by us as fellow-subjects, one of their first functions of free citizenship is to provide for self-defence and to pay their own way in military as in other matters. If we sent troops for their local defence it would be not a link of union as the noble Lord says, but a chain thrown upon them. The old principle of dealing with colonial defence was a bad one, and had so far alienated the colonists, and weakened our connection with them. The keeping of troops in New Zealand had only led to little wars being kept up with the Maories for the purpose of securing a pecuniary advantage to the colony by the support of British troops; and the withdrawal of the troops was the commencement of permanent peace and order. We should, I think, do very wrong indeed to revert to the policy of maintaining home troops in colonies. But in Imperial work the two should work together.

COUNTY COURT APPEALS (IRELAND) BILL.

Read 1ª and to be printed. (No. 104.)

WALTHAM ABBEY GUNPOWDER FACTORY BILL. (No. 65.)

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; and to be read 3ª to-morrow.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 84.)

SECOND READING.

Lord MACNAGHTEN: My Lords, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, I desire to explain to your Lordships that it is intended to give power to the Land Commission to advance money to tenants to purchase lands which either adjoin their holdings or which, in the opinion of the Land Commission, are reasonably required for the suitable and convenient use and enjoyment of such holdings. The Bill proposes to limit the advance by the Land Commission to any one purchaser

under this Act to cases in which not more than ten acres were purchased. The measure is required owing to the Land Purchase Acts only providing for cases in which the tenant buys his own holding, whereas in many instances it is desirable to assist a tenant to enlarge his holding. The money would be advanced upon the same terms and conditions as if advanced under the Land Purchase Act of 1885 and the amending Acts.

Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House to-morrow.

THE OFFICE OF HIGH SHERIFF.

QUESTION—OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, I desire to call attention to the long delay which has taken place in presenting the Bill relating to the office of the High Sheriff, and to ask when the Bill will be introduced. I was told shortly before Easter, upon putting a question in your Lordships' House on the subject, that the Bill relating to the office of High Sheriff would be introduced after the House reassembled, but so far it has not made its appearance. I have received many applications from gentlemen who names are on the list of sheriffs, inquiring whether it is proposed to change certain of the duties and responsibilities of the office, and I therefore beg to ask Her Majesty's Government, with a view to removing uncertainty, when it is proposed to introduce the Bill?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I am extremely sorry I am not able to give a definite answer to the noble Lord. I must, however, remind him that there is much difference of opinion on the subject. I cannot go into the matter at this moment and explain to the noble Lord what those difficulties are. Though some of them have been got over there are some still outstanding. I am afraid I cannot at this moment give any more definite answer than that. I may say I differ myself on some points from the Report of the Committee which inquired into this matter; but I hope we may be able to legislate on the subject without undue delay.

LORD COLERIDGE: A question has been raised with regard to trumpeters, and I believe the matter is under consideration.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I may re-assure the noble and learned Lord with regard to that matter. Whenever the question has been raised the matter has been left entirely as it is at present, and it is not proposed to alter the present procedure as to trumpeters.

HARES PRESERVATION BILL. (No. 72.)

House in Committee, on Re-commitment (according to order); an Amendment made: The Report thereof to be received to morrow.

LAND TRANSFER BILL. (No. 8.)

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3ª on Tuesday the 25th instant.

ASSIZES RELIEF BILL. (No. 96.)

Amendments reported (according to order); further Amendments made; Bill to be read 3ª to-morrow, and to be printed as amended.

ARBITRATION BILL. (No. 97.)

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3ª to-morrow.

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock, till to-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 3rd June, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

ESTIMATES FOR NAVAL DEFENCES.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the Estimates for ships, together with guns, machinery, and outfit, given in the Naval Defence Bill at 21½ millions, are based upon the prices current when in July last the Board of Admiralty decided upon their new programme, or whether the Estimates are based upon prices now current?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The Estimate was framed

upon what we believed would be the current prices for the time during which the Bill is to be in operation.

POLLUTION OF SCOTCH LOCHS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is able to make any statement as to the intentions of the Government with reference to the continued pollution of Loch Long and Loch Goil?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson, Buteshire): As the operations in question are still persisted in, I am authorised to state that the Board of Trade are prepared to place at the disposal of the residents complaining whatever powers they possess as owners of the *solum* of Loch Long, with a view to testing whether the proceedings of the Clyde Navigation Trustees are or are not legal, provided the Board are indemnified against all expenses.

GOVERNMENT STORES.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what are the rules of the War Office as to the sale of Government rifles and cartridges and accoutrements; what arms and Government stores have, during the present year, been sold to the East African Company, and at what price and after what competition; and whether the person applying on behalf of the Company was a high official of the War Office?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The rule of the War Office as to the sale of arms and ammunition is that they shall not be sold in a condition fit for use except with the special approval of the Foreign Office, Home, or Colonial Office. So far as the War Office is concerned we should be glad to sell all obsolete stores in the condition in which they would produce the best prices in aid of Army votes; but inasmuch as the arms might be improperly used the practice is as I have stated. With regard to this specific case, the East African Company with the permission of the Foreign Office was allowed to purchase some snider cavalry carbines, with pouches and ammunition. They were bought at what was considered their full value; and with the conditions under which they were sold competition was, of course, impracticable. The application on behalf of the company came through an officer who had very shortly before been appointed to the headquarter's staff.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS TELEGRAPH STAFF.

MR. BEAUFOY (Lambeth, Kennington): I beg to ask the Postmaster General what arrangements are made as to the disposal of the House of Commons' telegraph staff during the short recesses at Easter and Whitsuntide; and whether they, in common with other officials of the House, have a shortened duty, as a recompense for the long and irregular hours of attendance while the House is sitting; and, if not, whether he can recommend that such a concession be made?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. H. C. RAIKES, Cambridge University): The telegraphists who are employed at the House of Commons while the House is sitting, are during the recesses at Easter and Whitsuntide employed elsewhere. The attendance of these telegraphists throughout the Session compares favourably with the attendance of telegraphists employed wholly elsewhere. Under ordinary circumstances each telegraphist only performs four late duties in each fortnight. They have also the advantage of a week's more holiday every year than is allowed to other telegraphists.

INDIA—ORDNANCE CONTRACTS—SPECIAL DEFENCE WORKS.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India, who was the contractor to whom a sum of £18,000 was advanced in 1886-7 for 10-inch guns for India for special defence works, and when they should have been delivered; what amount was similarly advanced in that year for 10-inch and 6-inch guns being made at Woolwich, and when they should have been delivered; what amounts were similarly advanced for guns and gun mountings to the War Office and contractors in the year 1885-6; who were the contractors; and when should the guns and mountings have been delivered?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): (1) Whitworth and Co., August, 1888; (2) no advance for

Woolwich guns; (3) nothing to the War Office; £24,000 to contractors, of which a moiety was paid by the War Office; (4) Sir W. Armstrong and Co.; (5) the guns 10 or 12 months after acceptance of the steel. The mountings ordered in August, 1888, were to be delivered, the first eight months afterwards, and then at one per month.

MR. HANBURY: Are any of them being delivered now?

SIR J. GORST: That is a question I cannot answer without notice.

COMMUTATION OF SENTENCE—CASE OF THOMAS PERRYMAN.

MR. COCHRANE-BAILLIE (St. Pancras, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he can state on what grounds Thomas Perryman, found guilty of murder in 1879, had his sentence commuted to penal servitude for life.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I collect from official records that Thomas Perryman, who was found guilty of murder in 1879, was respited, and the sentence commuted to penal servitude for life on the ground of absence of premeditation and of intention to cause death. The jury recommended him to mercy, and the Judge concurred in the recommendation.

MR. COCHRANE-BAILLIE: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the propriety of still further reducing the sentence?

MR. MATTHEWS: Perhaps the hon. Member will be good enough to communicate with me on the subject.

LEVEL CROSSINGS.

MR. PHILIPPS (Lanarkshire, Mid.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he is aware that it is proposed to make a level crossing for a railway on New Mill Road, one of the most beautiful and popular walks near Hamilton; whether it has been brought to his knowledge that over 500 inhabitants of Hamilton have already petitioned against the said level crossing; whether, in view of the admitted dangers and inconveniences of such crossings, he will represent to the Road Board the advisability of withdrawing their sanction to the proposed crossing; and, whether a public railway company can, without the authority of Parliament, legally make, maintain, or use, a branch line of railway crossing a highway on the level.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The attention of the Board of Trade has been directed to this railway by an inhabitant of the district. It is a railway which has not been submitted for inspection by the Board of Trade, and, so far as I am aware, has not been used for passenger traffic. If the Road Authority have given permission for the carriage of the railway across a public road without the authority of Parliament, the responsibility must rest with them. A copy, however, of the hon. Member's question has been sent to the Road Authority and to the company, and their attention has been directed to the Railway Clauses Act, 1845, which regulates the law with regard to level crossings.

ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS.

MR. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that at the election of churchwardens at the recent Easter Vestry, in the parish of Merthyr Tydvil, a poll was demanded, but that the Rector, acting as Chairman of the Vestry, required, as a condition of granting such a poll, a deposit of £35, although the cost of taking the poll, including that of an assessor, amounted to little over one-third of the deposit demanded; and whether the rector was legally entitled to impose such a condition, or to require any deposit whatever; and, if not, whether he will take steps to prevent the recurrence of any such abuse of authority in the future?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have made inquiry into this matter. The parish of Merthyr Tydvil is a large and populous one, and the proper conduct of a poll necessitates the employment of various officers whose services have to be paid for. On the occasion of the previous poll the auditor did not allow the expenses to be charged on the rates, and he surcharged the overseer. Unless the chairman paid the expenses out of his own pocket, it appears the only course was to ask for a guarantee from the per-

sons interested in calling for a poll. The rector's conduct was not unreasonable, but if it is suggested it is contrary to law, I must leave the persons interested to their legal remedy. I have no jurisdiction in the matter.

CHARGE AGAINST YEOMANRY OFFICERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the proceedings at an inquest held at Taunton upon the body of the daughter of a respected citizen of that town, at which a letter found on the body of the girl was read, in which it was stated she had drowned herself because she had on the previous evening been insulted and misused by two of the officers of the Yeomanry then in Taunton; that it was proved she had been in company with these officers; that their photographs were identified, but that they were not called as witnesses; and that it is asserted that hush money had been expended to prevent all further investigation into these matters; and whether under these circumstances he will cause some public inquiry to be made into the conduct of the incriminated officers?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Yes, Sir, my attention has been drawn to this case, and I have read the report of the inquest very carefully. Except for the letter found on the poor girl's body, which was evidently written under the influence of great agitation, the evidence goes to show that she was not misused by the officers, but may have been terrified by the threats and blackmailing of some roughs and prostitutes who had seen her in company with the officers. I am strongly of opinion that the officers in question ought to have appeared to give evidence at the inquest; but the adjutant states that they have not since been identified. It seems to me that, for the sake of the regiment, some further inquiry into the matter should be made by the commanding officer.

THE PORTUGUESE DEBT TO ENGLAND.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, at what date was the last application made to the Portuguese Government for the repayment of the sum of £2,489,240 19s. 9¼d., found to be due by Portugal to this country in 1815; on what ground did the Portuguese Government decline or defer paying the same; and, for what reason did the British Government abstain from urging the claims of this country to the sum due to it?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): The account was furnished to the Portuguese Government in 1823; there is no reply on record, nor have the claims of the British Government for repayment been since urged. The reason for not doing so was, doubtless, that the war was rather on behalf of Europe than of Portugal.

INEQUALITY OF SENTENCES—CASE OF GEO. CORNELIUS.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to the case of George Cornelius, a builder, convicted at the Old Bailey of forgery, of making a false declaration, and of stealing, who was, although previously convicted, sentenced to four months' imprisonment, and to the case of H. H. Landsberg, a porter, who pleaded guilty at the Central Criminal Court of embezzling and stealing, and was sentenced, though this was his first offence, to five years' penal servitude; and, whether he will consider the means to secure some equality in sentences?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have not yet received the Calendar containing a report of these cases, and I am unable, therefore, to state how far the apparent inequality of the sentences is to be explained by the peculiar circumstances of each case; if my hon. Friend considers either of the sentences excessive, I shall be glad to make full inquiry. The subject of securing greater equality in sentences has recently been under debate in this House, and I must refer my hon. Friend to that debate for the views of the Government on this question.

THE HYDERABAD DECCAN COMPANY.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): I beg to ask the Under

Secretary of State for India whether the offer which was made by the promoters of the Hyderabad Deccan Company to the Nizam, and which was referred some two months ago to the India Office for consideration, has been accepted or not; and, if not, whether there is an early prospect of this matter being concluded?

*SIR J. GORST: The matter is still under the consideration of the Secretary of State in communication with the promoters of the Deccan Company. No avoidable delay in coming to a decision will take place.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works, whether the new rose window which is being placed in the transept of Westminster Abbey is entirely different in design to the one which has been there since the beginning of the last century, and which was specially interesting as one of the last survivals of Gothic architecture in this country?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, University of Dublin): I have no authority over Westminster Abbey, but, having called the Dean's attention to the question of my hon. Friend, he has begged me to state that the window in question was in a state that made the replacing of the material by fresh stonework absolutely necessary. This being the case, the Dean and Chapter, acting under the advice of their architect, decided to follow what they had reason to believe was the earlier form of the window, rather than that introduced in the last century. The glass of the Dean Atterbury's period will of course be replaced.

MR. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will call upon the Dean of Westminster to state the authority?

No answer was returned to the question.

MAGAZINE RIFLES AND THE CONTINENTAL ARMIES.

LORD HENRY BRUCE (Wilts, Chippenham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can give the House any information as to the number of magazine rifles in the hands of Continental Armies, how many Army Corps are armed with them, and the number in course of construction?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Any information we may possess on this subject has necessarily been obtained from confidential sources, and cannot be communicated to the House.

THE VAN AND WHEEL TAX.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is true, as stated in the *Times* newspaper of May 25th, that he has addressed a letter to Sir John Farnaby Lennard, to the effect that "the Government do not propose to again introduce the van and wheel tax to the House of Commons?"

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): As far as I can ascertain, the letter is not authentic. I know nothing about it, nor does Sir John Lennard, to whom it is said to be addressed.

MR. CAUSTON: I saw the letter in the *Times* newspaper, and wished to know whether it was authentic.

IRELAND—THE POST OFFICE AT MOY.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he will state at what date Mr. Patterson, late Postmaster at Moy, county Tyrone, and now an Assistant Land Commissioner, ceased to act as Postmaster; whether the Post Office has since been carried on in the same premises, of which Mr. Patterson is still tenant or owner; what is the cause of delay in appointing a new Postmaster; whether applications for the office have been received from any other persons in Moy; and, whether it is understood that no person is to be appointed to the office who will not occupy these premises under Mr. Patterson?

*MR. RAIKES: Mr. Patterson resigned the office of Postmaster of Moy on the 22nd of March last, but the Post Office is, I understand, still being conducted on his premises. Upon receipt of Mr. Patterson's resignation, the usual inquiries were at once instituted as to the qualifications of the several candidates for the situation, and while the selection was being made from among those persons, certain other candidates presented themselves as to whose

qualifications it became necessary to make inquiry before I could arrive at a decision. Some delay in filling the appointment has thus been caused. I know of no such understanding as that suggested in the last paragraph of the hon. Member's question, and I can only say that I shall confer the appointment on the person whom I consider to be best qualified for the position of Postmaster, and who is able to provide suitable premises in a desirable situation.

SIERRA LEONE.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies when the Papers referring to disturbances at Sulymah, and other affairs in the Sierra Leone Settlement, which were promised by him on the 14th of March, will be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool (East Toxteth): The Papers will be laid this afternoon. I may explain that their presentation has been delayed in order that further despatches showing the conclusion of the matter might be included. All the correspondence is now in type.

THE EGYPTIAN DEBT.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs why the Egyptian Government have not included in their conversion scheme the £8,500,000 of the Five per Cent State Domain Mortgage, issued by Messrs. Rothschild and Sons; and what commission Sir Edgar Vincent, as head of the Financial Department in Egypt, has agreed to pay Messrs. Rothschild for the part they are taking in the conversion of the Egyptian Privileged Debt?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: As I informed my hon. Friend on the 16th ult., the conversion is being arranged by the Egyptian Government and not by Her Majesty's Government, who are not responsible for the details of the measure. Her Majesty's Government are not cognizant of the particulars of the negotiations with Messrs. Rothschild, or of the amount of the commission to be paid to that firm.

IRELAND—THE DONEGAL INDUSTRIAL FUND.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland whether he can afford information as to the uses to which the grant by Parliament of £1,000 to the Donegal Industrial Fund, for the purpose of extending its technical teaching and aiding in the industrial development of the congested districts of Donegal, has been put; how many teachers are now being employed by the Donegal Industrial Fund, in what districts, and in what subjects; and, whether he has received any report from Mrs. Ernest Hart on the subject; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table of the House?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): Mrs. Ernest Hart has been good enough to furnish the Chief Secretary with an interesting report which shows that considerable progress has been made in utilizing the Parliamentary grant of £1,000 to the Donegal Industrial Fund. A special building has been constructed and is rented at Gweedore, for the purposes of a technical school, this school being made use of by weavers and apprentices over a wide area. It was opened last November. A branch school was also opened in Milford last November, and by its means a number of weavers, dyers, and spinners have been trained. In addition to these schools, instruction has been given at several villages and at the people's homes. The principal subjects on which technical instruction has been given include the weaving or flannel making industry, which, according to the *Irish Manufacturers' Journal*, has improved in a wonderful manner through the action of this fund; the vegetable dyeing ndustry lace-making, and other forms of embroidery, while two young Donegal men are being trained with the object of becoming teachers of woodcarving and carpentering. The Chief Secretary gladly consents to grant Mrs. Hart's report as an unopposed return if the right hon. Gentleman desire to move for its presentation.

OPHTHALMIA IN HANWELL SCHOOLS.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the

Guardians of the City Union have fully met the requirements of his Department for the effectual eradication of ophthalmia in the Poor Law Schools at Hanwell; and, if not, what steps he proposes to take to insure this result?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am glad to be able to state that the managers of the Central London School District have determined to abandon their scheme for treating ophthalmia within the present school buildings, and in accordance with the recommendation of the Local Government Board have agreed to provide additional buildings at Hanwell for the accommodation of 400 children with the requisite staff. They have also agreed to appoint a medical man with special experience in the treatment of ophthalmia to undertake the exclusive charge of the ophthalmic cases, and he will be required to devote his whole time to the service of the managers.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman seriously consider whether this enormous school of 1,200 children ought not to be broken up, as ophthalmia constantly occurs when children are brought together in large numbers?

*MR. RITCHIE: No doubt that is a very important subject, but it can hardly be dealt with in answer to a question.

IRELAND—CHARGE OF BOYCOTTING.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the following report in the London papers—namely:—

"At a Court at Piltown, on Saturday, James Doyle, carrying on business as a shoemaker at Harristown, near Waterford, was prosecuted for boycotting two emergency men, who are working a farm from which a widow, named Flynn, was evicted. The boycotting consisted in his having exhibited in his shop window a board with the words 'No bum-bailiffs or emergency men shod here.' Doyle's defence was that, as bum-bailiffs and emergency men were obnoxious persons, if they entered his house he would lose his customers. He was sentenced to a month's imprisonment;"

and, whether the facts are as stated; and, if so, since when has it been that, according to law, a man may be sent to gaol for a month for notifying on his own windows that he will only mend shoes for those he chooses to work for?

*MR. MADDEN: The Magistrates in the case were satisfied that the notice referred to was used by Doyle as part of a system of intimidation against certain individuals and not for the *bonâ fide* purpose of his trade. The case was heard at an ordinary Petty Sessions, and Doyle, having been asked to give sureties for good behaviour, and having refused to do so, was imprisoned as mentioned in the question.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Has the right hon. Gentleman never heard of the advertisements which concluded with the words "No Catholics need apply"?

MR. STOREY: The hon. and learned Gentleman has not answered the last paragraph of my question—namely, since when it has been the fact that, according to law, a man may be sent to gaol for a month for notifying on his own windows that he will only mend shoes for those he chooses to work for? In what principle does that differ from many advertisements which have been printed in my own newspaper announcing that certain persons are wanted, but that no Irish need apply?

*MR. MADDEN: I have already pointed out that in this case the Magistrates came to the conclusion that this was not such a notice as the hon. Gentleman refers to, but part of a system of intimidation directed against certain individuals.

MR. STOREY: I beg to give notice that on Tuesday, the 18th, which is the earliest convenient day after the holidays, I will ask the hon. and learned Gentleman, or the Chief Secretary, to inform the House what other offence the man had committed.

COLONEL WARBURTON.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has become aware of the fact that an action was lately tried at Newport News, Virginia, United States, in which Colonel Warburton, British Vice Consul there, claimed damages for libel against the proprietor of the *Newport News Commercial* on account of charges of indecent and disgraceful conduct made against him in that newspaper, and that the result of the action was that the jury found a verdict for the de-

fendant; and, if so, what steps he has taken, or will take, in regard to Colonel Warburton?

*SIR. J. FERGUSSON: We have heard nothing of this action for libel.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman take action in the case if I furnish him with a copy of the Report of the case? Is it not a fact that the inhabitants have petitioned for the removal of this person?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I mentioned a few days ago that the allegations against the Vice Consul were inquired into and were found to be without foundation.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman indicate how the inhabitants of the town can rid themselves of a person whom they regard as a perfect nuisance?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: The inhabitants can apply to the Government of the United States, and if they find it necessary to represent the matter to Her Majesty's Government, it can be properly inquired into.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): Some days ago I had a similar question upon the Paper, and the right hon. Gentleman complained that I was not in my place to put it. I was absent inadvertently. I wish now to ask the right hon. Gentleman if the matter referred to in the question of my hon. Friend did not take place subsequent to the inquiry he has mentioned, and whether Her Majesty's Government will take some action to rid the town of a gentleman who is not only a nuisance to the town, but a disgrace to his country? [*Cries of* "Oh, oh," and "Order."]

SIR J. FERGUSSON: I have already stated that we have no knowledge of any such fresh matter, and I have pointed out that there is a proper channel for communicating with Her Majesty's Government.

IRELAND—PRISON TREATMENT OF MR. FINUCANE, M.P.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Finucane, M.P., has, since his imprisonment, become reduced to an emaciated condition, and is suffering much and constantly from asthma; how long he has now been in prison; what part of the time he has spent in the prison hospital; and, whether he can be further subjected to imprisonment without permanent injury to his health and danger to his life? I may add that I have received a telegram which states that Mr. Finucane is much worn and that his health appears to be permanently injured.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The prison medical officer reports to the Board that the prisoner mentioned is under treatment in hospital, but that he is not emaciated, nor does he suffer much or constantly as alleged in the question. He has been about eight weeks in prison and for the past four weeks under hospital treatment, and receives an extra hour's exercise daily. The medical officer further reports that the prisoner's present condition shows no sign that further imprisonment would have the effects suggested in the concluding paragraph of the question.

MR. CLANCY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he does not think that a man who has been in hospital for four weeks should be let out now?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I cannot lay down any general proposition of that kind. Every care appears to be taken of the prisoner.

THE NEW CODE.

MR. HARRY DAVENPORT (Staffordshire, Leek): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, after the New Code comes into operation, all the scholars present on the day of the examination in drawing will be liable to be examined, or whether this examination will continue to be conducted under the present conditions laid down by the Science and Art Department, one of which is that the examination schedule is to contain only the names of those scholars who have been on the school register for 22 weeks previous to the end of the school year?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): The examination in drawing is regulated by a Minute of the Science and Art Department, and will not be affected by anything contained in the Code.

IRELAND—OUTRAGES AT CLADDAGH.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been directed to the following paragraph in the *Galway Observer*—

"A Bible reading establishment and tract depository has, we understand, lately been opened in the village of Claddagh. What mostly gives rise to the talk about the matter is that a prominent local Catholic landlord, and merchant, and Town Commissioner, &c., let the house for such a purpose. We must only impute it to ignorance, which looks bad in a public man. Whatever may be the faults, or otherwise, of the Claddagh people, their steadfast fidelity to the Holy Church will be proof against the wiles of this trafficker of the 'Word,' and he will learn before his term of occupation expires, that his last state may be worse than his first;"

whether he is aware that the work of Mr. Baile (the Evangelist alluded to) is entirely confined to Protestant soldiers and seamen; whether he is aware that language of a similar character to the paragraph in the *Observer*, has been used in the chapels by some Dominican Priest; whether Mr. Baile's house has been twice attacked; whether, on one of these occasions, large stones were thrown into the room where his wife and children were sleeping; and, whether any protection has been afforded to Mr. Baile?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabularly Authorities report that Mr. Baile is an Army Scripture Reader and Missionary to seamen, and it is understood he has never spoken to any person on the subject of religion except Protestant seamen and soldiers. He has been residing in Claddagh for two months, and was in no way interfered with until the article referred to appeared on the 18th May in the *Galway Observer*. On the night of the publication of this article Mr. Baile's house was attacked with stones while the family were in bed, and four panes of glass were smashed in one of the bedroom windows, one of the stones breaking through the shutter and falling close to the bed. A second attack was made on the house on the 25th May. The police were in ambush and arrested three men concerned, while on another day one pane was smashed. The local police have taken precautions to protect Mr. Baile in the matter.

MR. MACARTNEY: Is it the fact that the landlord has given notice to determine Mr. Baile's tenancy?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information as to that point.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman say, are the imputations conveyed in the fourth paragraph of the question well founded? Have priests in the town used language similar to that quoted?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have received a Report rather indicating that they did, but I am not sufficiently satisfied with it to give a specific answer. If the right hon. Gentleman will repeat the question I will make further inquiries.

MR. SEXTON: Yes; I will ask a further question on the subject. I shall be extremely surprised if the priests did not deprecate any such conduct.

THE SKINNERS' COMPANY ESTATES AT BALLYNASSEEN.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to a report in the Belfast *Northern Whig* of the 30th May, wherein it is stated that notices were extensively posted throughout the Ballynasseen portion of the Skinners' Estate, inviting tenants to meet the company's agent at Draperstown on the 22th May, to sign agreements for the purchase of their holdings; whether he is aware that in October and in April last the company had obtained ejectment decrees against a number of tenants who have since signed agreements to perchase; and, whether, having regard to the manner in which the Drapers' Company sought to obtain a price which the Land Commission refused to advance, he will give the House an opportunity of considering the matter before any advance is made in favour of the Skinners' Company?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It appears that a few notices were posted in the neighbourhood of Draperstown of the nature indicated in the first paragraph of the question. No ejectment warrants were obtained by the Skinners' Company at the Draperstown October Petty Sessions, and only four such warrants were obtained by them in April, while in two only of these cases were agreements signed to purchase. A large number of the tenants have already purchased their holdings, and are represented to

be well pleased with their action. Negotiations are still going on with the remaining tenants, and it is stated that no undue pressure is being put upon them. The Land Commissioners will, of course, carefully investigate all proposals submitted to them.

TIMES WITNESSES AT MILLBANK PRISON.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the prisoner Nally, who was brought from Downpatrick to Millbank Gaol, and kept there as a witness for the *Times* at the Royal Commission from November, 1888, till March, 1889, whether he will state how many hours of the twenty-four he was kept alone in his cell each day during his stay at Millbank; whether an application to visit Nally was made and refused, and what were the grounds of such refusal; whether his fellow prisoner, James Mullett, was allowed a visit, and what was the reason for the different treatment; and whether convicts in English prisons are usually kept in their cells twenty-two hours out of the twenty-four each day?

MR. MATTHEWS: The prisoner Nally had two hours' exercise daily. He attended chapel every Sunday and every other day of the week. He was alone in his cell the remainder of the day, but had the usual opportunities of seeing the priest and prison officials. Application to visit Nally was made on the 8th of January, but was not granted, this privilege having been forfeited by misconduct. Mullett was visited on the 3rd of January, the privilege in his case not having been forfeited. The answer to the last paragraph is in the affirmative.

MR. M'CARTAN: What was the nature of the infringement of the rules?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have not the particulars, but I think the question has been answered two or three times. I think he was reported for misconduct in Ireland.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether James Mullett was charged with having committed an offence at Downpatrick Railway Station on the occasion of his removal to England as a witness for the *Times* at the Royal Commission, and what was the nature of the offence; whether he was tried for this alleged offence in the usual way by a Visiting Justice, or how was he tried; and what was the term and nature of the punishment inflicted on him therefor?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The prisoner referred to was reported for a breach of the rule as to the observance of silence. He was not tried by a Visiting Justice; the case was submitted to the Prisons' Board, but it was not considered the offence called for any punishment.

MR. SEXTON: Was the breach of the rule words spoken at the railway station?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I presume that was so from the answer received; but I gather that in this particular case the offence was not regarded as of a serious character.

MR. M'CARTAN: Was the offence giving his name to a man on the railway station platform, and crying "God save Ireland?"

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Perhaps it was because of the innocence of the words that no punishment was awarded.

THE NIGER TERRITORIES.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Major Macdonald has yet reported on the administrations of the Niger territories and other territory for which he was deputed; and whether his Report will be laid before the House before the African Votes are taken; and whether Her Majesty's Government know anything of a circular setting forth that E. H. Hewett, Esq., has been sent to invite the kings and chiefs from Benin to Rio de Rey to acquiesce in the assignment of governmental powers to a company called the African Association, Liverpool, and stating that Her Majesty's Government assents to those proposals?

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: Major Macdonald has not yet reported. His Report, when received, will be of a confidential nature. An anonymous circular of the character described has been brought to the notice of the Foreign Office. We have no knowledge as to its authorship. It contains statements, altogether without foundation, as to the instructions under which Consul Hewett is acting and as to the views of Her Majesty's Government.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Before the African Votes are taken, will the general result of the investigation be stated?

*SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: I cannot answer as to a Report which has not yet been received.

METROPOLITAN STREET TRAFFIC.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the powers of the police to regulate vehicular traffic in the Metropolis depend solely on special statutes on that subject, or whether they have and exercise any general power of regulation; whether they have done anything to prevent fast driving round corners as distinguished from the general question of furious driving; and whether the London County Council, or any Local Authority in the Metropolis, has power to make bye-laws on such subjects which the police will be bound to enforce; or, if not, whether he will propose legislation to delegate such power to the local representatives of the Metropolis, in council assembled, and relieve Parliament of such functions?

MR. MATTHEWS: The powers of the police depend solely on special statutes. They can have no general power of regulation not conferred by statute. The police have always dealt with driving fast round corners as cases either of furious driving or of driving to the common danger of passengers. The Commissioner of Police is the Local Authority in the Metropolis for the regulation of traffic with a view to preventing obstruction and under the Streets Acts, but Parliament has not given to any Local Authority a general power to make bye-laws on the subject of nuisances in thoroughfares. It has dealt with that subject itself in much detail, and I believe that the enactments in force have been administered so as to give satisfaction to the public. It is not possible by any legislation completely to prevent occasional nuisances in a metropolis crowded as London is.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: May I ask whether in towns such as Birmingham and Manchester the authorities have not power to make bye-laws for regulating the use of the streets and against furious driving, and are not the same powers delegated to County Councils as to Local Authorities in boroughs?

MR. MATTHEWS: There are some Local Acts under which Municipal Authorities have power to make bye-laws, but as I have told the hon. Member three times Parliament has made bye-laws in regard to the traffic in the streets of the Metropolis, and if the hon. Member will refer to the statutes he will find the details set out.

SUMMONS AGAINST H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

An hon. MEMBER, on behalf of Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the refusal of the Magistrate at Bow Street to grant a summons to the representative of the *Sun* newspaper, who complained of having been assaulted by the Duke of Cambridge at Whitehall, on Saturday, at the Fire Brigade Inspection, in the face of the fact that two witnesses of the occurrence were present in Court to support the application, and that the journalist in question had suffered serious physical injuries which necessitate his undergoing medical treatment; and whether he proposes to take any, and what, action in the matter?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Magistrate that the information showed that there was a violent rush by a large crowd, which carried the complainant with it to the place where the Duke of Cambridge was standing. It was alleged that His Royal Highness, in repelling this rush, had assaulted the complainant. The Magistrate thought that it was consistent with everything that was alleged to have been done by the Duke of Cambridge that he acted solely and reasonably for the protection of himself and others, and that his action was justifiable. He therefore refused the summons, as he would have done in any other similar case. There was no evidence that the complainant had suffered serious physical injury. I do not propose to take any action in the matter. I have no jurisdiction to review the exercise of discretion by Magistrates.

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): Are we all justified in repelling a supposed attack in this way, taking the risk of consequences?

MR. MATTHEWS: It is impossible to give an answer in general terms.

Justification of any action involving assault must depend upon the circumstances.

MILITIA TRAINING.

MR. LAFONE (Southwark, Bermondsey): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to a paragraph in the *Shoe and Leather Record* of 1st June, in which it is stated that the time selected for the calling out of the Militia is inopportune; that it draws out of employment at the busiest season of the year a large number of men in the manufacturing towns; and that in the shoe producing centres in particular it is productive of much loss, both to manufacturers and workmen, and if so whether any steps can be taken to remedy the same?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The Militia trainings are always arranged in consultation with the officers commanding regiments, so as to cause the least inconvenience to their men. No complaint on the subject has been received at the War Office. Perhaps my hon. Friend will give me privately any particulars which may have reached him.

IRELAND—PROSECUTION OF A REPORTER.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact that the summons served under The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1877, on Mr. O'Mahony, a reporter on the staff of the *Cork Herald*, was signed by Resident Magistrate Caddell before the name of Mr. O'Mahony had been filled; and, if so, whether such action on the part of the Resident Magistrate is legal, and is approved of by the Government?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; the hon. Gentleman appears to have been misinformed.

MR. CLANCY: Is it not true that the summons was a blank form when it was signed? Does the right hon. Gentleman deny that?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, that is what I deny.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND DRAINAGE.

MR. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether Local Authorities have power to require owners and occupiers to keep rainfall and subsoil water out of the drains, which they are entitled to have connected with the sewers of a public authority under The Public Health Act, 1875?

*MR. RITCHIE: This is a legal question which, of course, I have no authority to determine. Moreover, it appears to me that a question of this character could not be properly answered without full knowledge of the circumstances of the particular case.

CAB LICENSES.

MR. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that there are 3,000 owners of one cab each, which they drive themselves, who have to pay the following sums annually: £2 police license, 15s. hackney carriage tax, and 5s. driver's license; and, whether he can afford them any relief under the powers given him by The Metropolitan Public Carriage Act, 1869?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that the actual number of persons paying the cab license was, during the past year, 2,183. There have been no complaints as to the amount or incidence of the police license, which has been fixed since 1870, and which is available for 12 months from the date when it is granted; but there has been dissatisfaction expressed with the 15s. Excise license, which is not like the police license, current for 12 months, but expires in all cases on December 31, so that in some cases hardship may result where the license has not been taken out in the early portion of the year. I will consult the Board of Inland Revenue as to whether any alleviation can be afforded to cab owners in respect to the Excise license.

DECORATION OF THE OUTER LOBBY OF THE HOUSE.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether his attention has been lately called to the condition of the three vacant compartments in the Outer Lobby of the House, which are very dirty, and covered with cracks and holes; and, whether, if he can hold out no hope of being able to

fill them up with mosaic, or other suitable artistic decoration, he will have them placed, during the coming Recess, in a decent state of repair?

MR. PLUNKET: The three vacant compartments in the Central Hall of this House have not been altered since Barry's time. I am not prepared at present to undertake that they shall be immediately provided with mosaics, but I will see that the panels are re-papered as soon as that work can conveniently be taken in hand.

WELSH TITHES—ALLEGED OUTRAGES ON CATTLE AT PENRHYN.

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the police have made any arrests in connection with the outrages on cattle belonging to Mr. Morris, an anti-tithe farmer of Sarnan, in the parish of Penrhyn, Cardiganshire; whether any reward has been offered for the apprehension and conviction of the person or persons concerned in such outrages; and, whether, considering the gravity of the case, the Government will themselves offer a suitable reward?

MR. MATTHEWS: The chief constable informs me that after making the fullest inquiry possible under the circumstances, it has not been at all established that outrages were committed on the cattle in question. The destruction of the cattle has prevented any satisfactory investigation of the cause of their death. No reward has been offered, nor do the Government intend to offer one.

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS: Has not a *post mortem* examination of one of the animals shown that the cause of death was internal injuries inflicted by a sharp instrument?

MR. MATTHEWS: It is not convenient to go into details. The Chief Constable informs me that a local farrier, not a qualified veterinary surgeon, did give an opinion as to the cause of the death of one of the cows, but a veterinary surgeon has since declared that the cause thus assigned was a physical impossibility.

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS: Has the Chief Constable informed the right hon. Gentleman that an indignation meeting of the inhabitants of the district has been held to protest against this report of the Chief Constable, and calling for more active police interference in the matter?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Chief Constable did inform me that what the hon. Gentleman calls an indignation meeting was held.

EMPLOYMENT OF ADDITIONAL POLICE AND MILITARY IN CARDIGANSHIRE.

MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, at a meeting of the Standing Joint Police Committee of Cardiganshire, held at Aberayron on the 23rd May, the Chief Constable refused to produce the correspondence between the Home Secretary and himself relative to the employment of additional police and cavalry at tithes sales and removals in that county; whether the management of the police is now vested in such Joint Committee; whether the Chief Constable is entitled to refuse to produce such correspondence to the Committee if required so to do; and, whether he will lay the correspondence upon the Table of the House?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Chief Constable did decline to produce the correspondence in question on May 23, having had too short a notice of the wish of the Joint Committee to see it. He has, however, no objection to produce it to the Joint Committee, and will do so at their next meeting. It will be unnecessary to lay it on the Table of the House.

H.M.S. *CALLIOPE* AT SAMOA.

MR. W. REDMOND on behalf of Mr. W. CORBET (Wicklow, E): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether any official reward or honour will be bestowed on Captain Kane for his splendid handling of his vessel

"in the teeth of a hurricane which destroyed all the vessels which remained at the anchorage he left,"

as stated in the letter of the Lords of the Admiralty of 21st May, or whether the following official record, contained in the Paper just laid upon the Table, is intended to be the only recognition of the distinguished bravery and seamanship of a gallant Irishman under circumstances that have no parallel in the Naval history of England:—

"My Lords are of opinion that great credit is due to the Officer commanding for the example

he set and the confidence he instilled into those under his orders."

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: It never has been the custom in the Naval service to use sensational language in praise of officers who have well performed their duty. The high approval by the Admiralty of the conduct of Captain Kane, his officers and men, has been publicly conveyed to them in terms which they will appreciate, and which are in accordance with the feelings and traditions of the Naval service. To confer a special reward or honour upon an officer for successfully navigating his vessel in a storm would be to reverse the established practice of the Navy, under which every commanding officer is personally responsible for the safety of his ship, and is tried by Court-martial if he loses her.

IRELAND—SCIENCE AND ART EXAMINATIONS IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland by whose authority a Circular has been issued to the teachers of the Science and Art classes in Ireland, informing teachers who hold classes under the Science and Art Department, that

"all pupils in National Schools who have not passed the second examination in sixth class should be ineligible for enrolment in a Science and Art class in the principles of agriculture,"

and cautioning them to be careful to exclude from their classes in this subject all such pupils; if the instruction contained in this Circular is in conformity with the rule set forth in the last edition of the "Science and Art Directory," page 63,

"that any pupil who has passed the standard of second stage of fifth class may be presented for examination by the Department of Science and Art in any subject of science;"

and whether he will take care that science teachers who have, during the past six months, been preparing classes for the May examinations, on the faith of the Department's Rules, will not now, on the eve of the examination, be debarred from presenting their pupils, and receiving the result fees to which they may be entitled.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member will find a full statement of the case, which has been published by the Comptroller and Auditor General, at page 405 of the Appropriation Account for 1887-88. The object of the new regulation is to effectually prevent duplicate payments for agriculture. It was made by the Commissioners of National Education after correspondence with the Science and Art Department. It will appear in the next edition of the "Science and Art Directory." Science teachers were not debarred from presenting pupils and receiving result fees at the May examinations, and of this fact the National School Inspectors received due notice.

THE SEVEN HOURS' SYSTEM IN THE CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT.

MR. CAINE (Barrow): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the following paragraph, contained in the *Civil Service Candidate* of the 20th April, which states that—

"Arrangements are still in progress for the application of the seven hours system in the Statistical Office of the Customs, and that system will shortly be carried into effect as regards the Lower Division clerks and copyists. The Secretary to the Treasury accounts for the delay which has arisen by saying that there is a difficulty in finding places in other Government departments for certain Lower Division clerks whose services in the Customs must be dispensed with in order to secure the necessary saving of public expense;"

whether he can say if this statement is accurate; and whether representations have reached him from the chiefs of any Departments that their offices are under-manned, and requesting the employment of additional clerks; and, if so, what further difficulty prevents the immediate introduction of the seven hours system to that Department?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): No, Sir. I have not heard of any offices to which the seven hours system has been applied which are under-manned, nor do I think there are any such. It is obvious that unless a corresponding reduction in numbers be made the payment for the additional hour will throw a heavy additional charge on the State. This is, I believe, the only obstacle in the way of applying the seven hours system.

DORCHESTER SAVINGS BANK.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the admitted fact that for several years false balance sheets have been forwarded to the National Debt Commissioners by the trustees of the Dorchester Savings Bank, which false balance sheets have been presented to this House in the Annual Returns, the Government intend to apply to the High Court of Justice for an inquiry, under the Act of 1887, with the view of ascertaining how it was that such balance sheets were certified by the auditor as correct, and countersigned by the trustees; and whether any, and, if so, what steps are to be taken with respect to the present actuary, who has prepared and forwarded to the National Debt Office many of the false balance sheets, as aforesaid?

MR. GOSCHEN: The question of inquiry is under consideration. I am glad to say I believe no loss will fall upon the depositors, restitution having been made by the family of the defaulter. This does not necessarily preclude inquiry for public purposes, and I am considering whether it is expedient to hold such or not.

SCOTCH HERRING BARRELS.

MR. ANGUS SUTHERLAND (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the attention of the Secretary for Scotland has been called to the hardship inflicted upon certain fishcurers in Scotland through the action of the Fishery Board in confiscating herring barrels with their contents, on the ground of their size and capacity being under the official standard; and, whether, having regard to the fact that the barrels were originally made under the supervision of the Board's own officers, and that the deficiency in size and capacity was due to causes over which the fishcurers had no control, such as shrinkage of the materials arising from exposure to the sun, he will use his influence to prevent any unnecessary interference with this important industry?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: The attention of the Secretary for Scotland has been called to the question of herring barrels not conforming to the official standard, and the matter is now the subject of investigation. It is certainly desirable that nothing should be done to cause vexatious or oppressive interference with this industry, and I am quite sure that this will be attended to.

WALES—CHARITY COMMISSION INQUIRIES.

MR. T. ELLIS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Penrith Division, whether the Charity Commissioners are now prepared to extend the inquiry into charities and doles of Welsh counties other than Denbighshire?

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): The Charity Commissioners have nothing to add to what they have already said on this subject, namely, that they have not received assistance from the Treasury necessary for the extension of the inquiry now being carried on in Denbigh beyond the limits of that county.

MR. T. ELLIS: I would ask the hon. Gentleman whether, as at present constituted, the Charity Commission is overworked and unable to do this work in Wales?

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: We have not sufficient officers to carry it on. I can say nothing about being overworked.

IRELAND—THE OLPHERT EVICTIONS —CONDUCT OF CAPTAIN TORRENS.

*MR. P. O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is true that the 2nd Dragoons, Royal Scots Greys, were recently on duty at the evictions on the Olphert estate, in the county of Donegal; whether Captain J. A. W. O'N. Torrens was in command of a company of Royal Scotch Greys on that occasion; whether he is aware that a Circular has been issued in the county of Londonderry, and the north of Ireland generally, bearing the signature of a J. A. Torrens, Somerset, Coleraine, soliciting subscriptions for Mr. Wybrants Olphert, to recoup him for certain rents alleged to have been withheld pending the concession of reductions demanded by his tenantry; whether the Captain J. A. W. O'N. Torrens, given in the Army List as belonging to the 2nd Dragoons, Scots Greys, is the same officer whose name is attached to the Circular re-

ferred to; and, if so, whether such interference in a political question is permissible on the part of an officer engaged on military duty in the district; and, whether he will take any, and what, steps in the matter?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I received a telegram from the General Officer commanding at Belfast, stating that the facts are substantially as stated in the Question. In the absence, however, of more details I would prefer not to express any opinion on Captain Torrens' proceedings. I must ask the hon. Gentleman to repeat his question at a later period.

MR. P. O'BRIEN: To morrow?

*MR. STANHOPE: I do not think I shall have the information to-morrow.

MR. P. O'BRIEN: I will put the question to-morrow.

CHARGES AT FALCARRAGH PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. P. O'BRIEN: I beg to ask Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland whether he is aware that, on Friday evening last, at the Petty Sessions Court at Falcarragh, five women and two men, who were unable to speak or understand English, were brought up before Mr. Ulick Bourke, R.M., charged with obstructing and resisting bailiffs and police during the evictions at Glashercoo, and were sent to Derry Gaol, on remand, till the 4th proximo; whether the evidence against them, having been taken down in English, the written depositions were translated into Irish in their presence, the interpreter being Head Constable Mahony; whether Mr. Bourke invited, through the interpreter, these prisoners to make statements, without having previously given them the usual warning that what they said might be used in evidence against them; whether he is aware that the persons charged made admissions in reply to the questions of Head Constable Mahony, as interpreter, incriminating themselves, and which, if used in evidence against them on trial, or by the police meantime in working up the charges against them, will prejudice them in their trial; and whether, taking into consideration that these people were being evicted from their cabins when these alleged offences were committed, and are now deprived of their homes, that they will have suffered ten days' imprisonment already, and this alleged departure from the usual custom in Petty Sessions Courts, the Crown proposes to press these charges any further?

MR. MADDEN: The hon. Gentleman has already put this question and I have answered it with the exception of the last paragraph. The prisoners were brought before the Resident Magistrate and their depositions were taken as soon as possible in the presence of the Inspector and the Petty Sessions Clerk. They were not invited to make any statement, nor did they make any admission. They were offered release on bail, but, refusing to give bail, were committed to prison.

MR. P. O'BRIEN: Will the hon. Member make further inquiry? I beg to inform him that I have the information from one who was present and heard the Magistrate interrogate the prisoners through the Head Constable.

MR. MADDEN: I think the hon. Gentleman must be mistaken. My information is positive.

COUNTY COURT PRACTICE—SWEARING AFFIDAVITS.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): I beg to ask the Attorney General, whether his attention has been called to the varying practice in different County Courts with regard to the swearing of affidavits; whether frequent delay is not caused to persons asking for summonses in consequence of the necessity to swear before the registrar; whether it would not be possible to avoid such delays by allowing affidavits to be sworn before the clerks who issue plaints: and, whether he would consider the desirability of the defendant being required to show reasonable or some cause for defence, beyond writing the answer "I intend to defend this action."

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): In answer to the question of the hon. Baronet, I would point out that with regard to affidavits used in County Courts it is provided by the 83rd Section of the Act of the last Session that any such affidavit may be sworn before the Judge, registrar, or by a clerk to the registrar appointed by the Judge, and also before a Commissioner for Oaths, or a Justice of the Peace. I am not aware that any delay has been caused since the Act referred to came into force. With re-

gard to the last paragraph of the question the matter has been frequently under consideration and was discussed before the Grand Committee last Session, but it has been thought undesirable to call upon poor persons who are in many cases without legal assistance to show reasonable cause for defence in actions brought against them.

THE JACKSON CHARITY, SHOREDITCH.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Attorney General, whether he is aware that by the will of the late Joseph Jackson, of Shoreditch (proved in 1871), the sum of £10,000 was left for the establishment and maintenance of a cottage hospital and soup kitchen for the benefit of the poor of Shoreditch; whether he is aware that the will in respect to the £10,000 was pronounced by Mr. Justice Kay to be valid, and whether this Judgment was confirmed by the Court of Appeal in April 1887, and the Attorney General directed to devise and submit to the Court a *cy pres* scheme; whether he is aware that since the Judgment of the Court the Governors of the Metropolitan Hospital have offered to provide a wing for patients from Shoreditch on receiving a part of the legacy, and that the Charity Trustees of Shoreditch have, to meet the difficulty in mortmain, offered to purchase a suitable site for the soup kitchen, and partially endow it, on condition that a proper proportion of the legacy is applied to its building and support; whether he can say what has been the reason of the delay in devising a scheme; whether he will see that a scheme is devised without further delay; and, whether he will submit it to the consideration of the Vestry and Charity Trustees of Shoreditch before it is submitted to the Court for its sanction?

*SIR R. WEBSTER: In answer to the question of the hon. Member I have to say that there has been no delay in working out the Judgment in regard to the bequest of the late Mr. Joseph Jackson. It was the duty of the trustees of the will to prepare a scheme, which they have done, and the scheme was submitted for and received my approval some time back. As regards the hospital, upon the undertaking of the chairman and committee to provide four beds in each of three wards exclusively for Shoreditch patients, a sum of money will be transferred to the official trustees of charitable funds, who will pay over the income to the treasurer of the hospital, and a further sum will be paid to the building fund. As regards the soup kitchen, minutes of an order have been prepared by the trustees of the will, and approved on my behalf, providing that on the Charity Trustees of Shoreditch, with the sanction of the Charity Commissioners, providing a site, the trustees of the will shall erect a soup kitchen; a further sum will be available for its endowment, and will be applied by the Shoreditch Trustees jointly with the trustees of the will. The Shoreditch Trustees will shortly receive notice of an application to the Court for an order in terms of the minutes.

MINING ROYALTIES.

MR. BRADLAUGH, on behalf of Mr. BURT (Morpeth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can now give the names of the Members of the Royal Commission on Mining Royalties?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): With the exception of one or two names, the Royal Commission is complete; but I would prefer not to give the names till I have heard from those who have been asked to join, but who have not yet had time to reply.

THE SUGAR BOUNTY CONVENTION.

MR. CALEB WRIGHT (Lancashire, S.W., Leigh): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the report in the newspapers is correct that the Commissioners under the Sugar Bounties Convention held their last meeting on Friday last, and if so, can he inform the House whether the Government have finally decided to proceed with the Sugar Convention Bill; and whether, considering the vast commercial interest involved in this question, he would relieve the anxiety of the country by giving a definite answer as to the views of the Government?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The last meeting of the Sugar Bounty Convention was held on Saturday, the 1st inst., and the Report has been sent to Lord Salisbury. The Second Reading of the Sugar Convention Bill is, as the hon. Member is probably aware, down for the 20th inst.,

and then will be the fitting time for Her Majesty's Government to announce their intentions in regard to the Bill.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): I beg to ask whether the Second Reading of the Sugar Convention Bill will be taken on June 20, or is to be postponed?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: At this distance of time it is quite impossible for me to say what business will be taken on June 20. I will undertake that ample notice will be given to all gentlemen who desire to take part in the debate. Unless considerable progress is made with the business which stands before it on the Paper, it is not probable that the Second Reading will be taken on June 20.

CONSTITUTION HILL.

SIR R. FOWLER: Is the First Commissioner now in a position to make any statement in regard to Constitution Hill?

*MR. PLUNKET: This subject has been, as I mentioned in the House a few days ago, for some time under consideration, and I am glad to say that I am now authorized to state that the Queen has been pleased to approve of the opening of Constitution Hill for light traffic, under rules somewhat similar to those now in force with regard to the road between St. James's Palace and Buckingham Gate. The road will be closed when the Queen is in London, and at such other times as it may seem necessary and right to do so. Her Majesty's approval was formally signified on the 25th of last month, and steps will be taken for carrying into effect Her Majesty's wishes.

THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS.

SIR G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): Can the right hon. Gentleman say if there is to be any realization of the hope that the Whitsuntide recess would be prolonged?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I should have been very glad, indeed, to meet the wishes of hon. Members who desire a prolongation of the holidays, but I think the right hon. Gentleman will agree that the progress of business since Easter has not been such as would justify me in asking the House to assent to a prolongation of the recess.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES) BILL.

MR. STUART RENDEL (Montgomeryshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to his declaration on May 15th, that the desire of the Government is that the Intermediate Education (Wales) Bill should pass this year, the First Lord will now state what course the Government propose to take with a view of giving effect to such desire?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: From the day the Intermediate Education (Wales) Bill was read a second time the Departments principally concerned have done much work with a view to formulating the clauses which it would be in the power of the Government to offer to hon. Gentlemen interested in that Bill, indicating the views of the Government upon the question. I thought that would be the course which would be most fair to hon. Gentlemen, so as to enable them to see whether they and the Government could come to an agreement. It has not been possible, owing to the intricacy and difficulty of the question, to formulate those clauses sooner. I am afraid it would not be possible for the Government to put their amendments on the Paper before Whitsuntide.

BI-METALLISM.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Sheffield Brightside): I beg fo ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is the intention of the Government to confine the debate on bi-metallism to the four hours available to-morrow night?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am very deeply impressed with the general importance of this subject, and feel that four hours would be quite inadequate for its discussion; but I stated to my right hon. Friend the Member for Lincolnshire that it was not possible for me to offer any Government time for that purpose. If it is the pleasure of the House to consider the subject to-morrow night, we shall endeavour to contribute as much as we can to that purpose. Probably an adjournment will be necessary, but I am not able to say when the adjourned debate would come on.

SIR L. PLAYFAIR: Is it not possible for the Government to obtain an

opportunity for the resumption of the debate?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It is utterly impossible to offer any Government time for the purpose of the discussion on bi-metallism until after Supply has been concluded. And until then I should be wanting in my duty to the House if I interposed any other business whatever which was not of the most urgent character, or which did require immediate consideration.

SCOTCH LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): Will the Committee on the Scotch Local Government Bill be taken on the Monday after the recess?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir; not on the first Monday.

SCOTCH BUSINESS.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Will any Scotch business be taken on the 17th June?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: We propose to take the Second Reading of the Scotch Universities Bill on that day.

COLDBATHFIELDS.

MR. BARTLEY: Before the site of Coldbathfields Prison is utilized for Post Office purposes, will opportunity be afforded for discussing the proposal to convert it into public gardens?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am afraid I cannot give any such undertaking.

CONTINUATION SCHOOLS.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he has given attention to a memorial signed by 160 Members in favour of the Second Reading of the Evening Continuation Schools Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It will not be in the power of the Government to assent to the Second Reading of this Bill without debate. It will not be possible to proceed with it either to-day or to-morrow. The Bill contains a clause which imposes a very large expenditure on the Exchequer, and it ought to be very carefully considered.

IRELAND—ALLEGED OUTRAGE BY MILITARY AT LUGGACURRAN.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland what are the facts with regard to the outrage committed on a girl by soldiers during the evictions at Luggacurran?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have heard of the alleged occurrence. I do not know the details, and it would not be proper to discuss them if I could state what they are, as the persons incriminated have been committed.

MR. SEXTON: Then I will ask whether, owing to the excitement in the district, which has been intensified by this outrage, the detachment of soldiers will be withdrawn?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a question which should be put to the Secretary of State for War. I may say, however, that I am not prepared to admit that there is any great excitement in the district.

MR. SEXTON: I will ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the excitement caused by this circumstance, he will consider the advisability of withdrawing this military detachment?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I will look into the matter. I have not heard of it until this moment.

ST. KATHARINE'S HOSPITAL.

Copy ordered—

"Of the Rules of the Royal Hospital of St. Katharine, in the Regent's Park, in the county of Middlesex, dated the 22nd day of July, 1878, made by the late Lord Cairns, then Lord Chancellor."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 182.)

SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH CONTRACT (HALIFAX AND BERMUDA).

Copy ordered—

"Of Treasury Minute dated the 3rd day of June, 1889, relating to the Contract dated the 12th day of April, 1889, for the construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from Halifax, Nova Scotia, to the Island of Bermuda (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 120, of Session 1889)."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 183.)

EAST INDIA (ABKARI DEPARTMENT).

Address for—

"Return of any Despatch or other Papers sent out from the India Office to the Viceroy of India with regard to the Resolution moved by the hon. Member for Flintshire, and carried by the House on 30th April."—(*Mr. Caine.*)

PENSIONS (CIVIL LIST).

Return ordered—

"Of all persons now in receipt of Pensions charged upon the Civil List."—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act (1883) Amendment Bill, with Amendments.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

BANN DRAINAGE BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [31st May]—

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the improvement of the drainage of lands, and for the prevention of inundations within the catchment area of Lough Neagh, and the Lower Bann; and for other purposes relating thereto."—(*Mr. Arthur Balfour*)

And which Amendment was,

"To leave out from the word 'That' to end of the Question, in order to add the words 'inasmuch as the proposed scheme of drainage is essentially local in character, and tends principally to the benefit of the landlords owning the land in the districts affected, this House is of opinion that all such works should be undertaken by, and at the expense of, an Irish Local Administration,'"—(*Mr. Conybeare,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I wish to point out that the opposition to these Bills does not come from the Irish representatives. The hon. Member for Camborne last year, as this year, was, and is, the person who is really responsible for opposing the introduction of these Bills, and while I hope the Amendment on the Notice Paper of which he has given notice may not be carried, I can quite understand the feeling which has prompted him to oppose the introduction of these Bills, involving as they do hundreds of thousands of pounds of money which will have to be found by the taxpayers of this country, and which money will be expended in Ireland for drainage purposes, without practically the English having any control over the expenditure. Now, the whole of the difficulty is how that money is to be expended, and I can fully appreciate the feeling of the hon. Member when, looking back upon the very many blunders committed in Ireland in the past with regard to public works, he thought it inadvisable to allow this cash to pass out of the control of Parliament. I think, however, that the declaration of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to the effect that the Irish Board of Works will not have control over the expenditure of the money granted under these Bills will go far to remove the opposition to their introduction. It was an unfortunate thing that it was proposed that the Board of Works should have something to do with the Shannon Drainage Scheme, and I hope the matter will be removed out of their hands, because everything which that Board undertakes in Ireland turns out to be a failure. Under the circumstances, I trust that the hon. Member for Camborne will not press his Motion to a division, but that the Bills may be allowed to be introduced. I know it is said that last year the progress of these Bills was postponed owing to the action of certain representatives from Ireland, but I wish to say that that statement is absolutely without foundation. We did not oppose the introduction of the measure, and I may add that I am rather disposed to agree with the hon. Member for North Armagh, who spoke on Friday, and said that practically there was a unanimous feeling among the people in all parts of Ireland with regard to the passing of these Bills. At the same time, many of the Irish people are strongly of opinion that such works as these can only be properly carried out under a Home Government in Dublin. We feel that there should be some responsible Central Authority in Dublin to superintend and look after the carrying out of these works, and I do not think it is possible that such undertakings could be carried to a successful issue under the present system of Government, a system which is responsible for results equally unsatisfactory to the Irish people and to the English taxpayer. Still, I again repeat that we, the Irish Members, do not offer any opposition to the introduction of these Bills, although we desire at the same time to give expression to the very strong feeling that we hold that these works cannot be satis-

factorily completed under the present system of Government in Ireland.

SIR C. LEWIS (Antrim, N.): I wish to thank the Government on the part of my constituents for thus pressing forward the Bann Drainage Bill, which so much affects the County Antrim. I wish to refer to the unsubstantial but successful opposition of last year to the Bill, which was the cause of losing a whole year in carrying out this necessary undertaking. The renewal of that objection this year has shown by the result how shadowy and unreal such opposition is, and it only rests with the Government to press this and the kindred measures forward this Session. No real opposition can in such a case be met with, at least from the majority of the Irish Members or of any section. The House is frequently appealed to to bring forward remedial measures for Ireland, of which in truth there have been plenty, but this also is practically a measure which has been brought forward at the instigation of an independent Royal Commission, and I therefore hope that the Government will not fail to insist on these Bills being finally dealt with by the House this year.

*MR. LEA (Londonderry, South): I prefer the old-fashioned practice of discussing details of Bills such as these on the Second Reading, and, therefore, on the present occasion, I only intend to urge upon the Chief Secretary for Ireland the desirability of getting the Second Reading of the Bills over as quickly as possible, and then referring them, not to a Committee of the whole House, but to a Select Committee, which may hear evidence and report to the House. I think it is desirable that questions of engineering and compensation for eel fisheries should be referred to a Select Committee rather than be discussed in this House, and I trust therefore that the Chief Secretary will adopt the course I have intimated.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): I take the liberty of assuring the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the House, and especially the hon. Member who spoke last, that whatever may be the course taken by the Irish Members as to these Bills, the hon. Member will find himself very much mistaken if he supposes that they will be allowed to pass into law without strong and strenuous opposition on the part of the Radical Members representing English and Scotch constituencies, and that, not because we doubt the inherent advantages of the plan to Ireland, but because we hold that these remedial measures for Ireland ought to be carried out at the expense of Ireland. At the proper time it will be my duty, and the duty of every one of the Radical Members in this House, to oppose these Bills on the ground that it is unjust and improper that the money of the English taxpayer should be taken in order to carry out these works in Ireland. Still for the present I would suggest the desirability of withdrawing the Amendment which has been moved on behalf of the hon. Member for Camborne.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I was one of those who took objection to these Bills last year, and although I am quite ready to admit that any expression of opinion on the details is not quite in order in a Second Reading debate, still I may point out that we have seen the measure, and at any rate were fully justified in taking objection to the principle which they involved. The principle of these Bills, so far as we are concerned, is that British money is to be spent in Ireland, and it is avowedly the first step in the direction of attempting to govern Ireland by bribes. You are seeking to govern the country partly by coercion, and partly by the expenditure of British money. In pursuance of that policy you are promoting these Bills, and I think that now is the time for us to speak out what we believe, or else we must hold our peace for ever after. Now, I am unfavourable to these Bills because I think that Irish improvements ought to be carried out at the expense of Ireland. I am unwilling to throw good British money after bad Irish money, and believing that Home Rule must come sooner or later, I think it is very doubtful, if we so spend our money, whether we shall get it back again. The Irish Secretary has not attempted to make out a case for granting the British subvention; he has not attempted to show that the districts in which this money is to be expended are particularly congested or poverty stricken. On the contrary, we know that one of the Bills provides for works in one of the most prosperous parts of

Ireland—in Ulster—and I want to know why we should make an Imperial subvention to such a prosperous part of Ireland. I speak feelingly on the subject as a Scotch Member. We see that you are lavish in spending your money on Ireland, but you are not so lavish in spending it on Scotland. There is another thing I want to know. How is the money to be found? Is it to be voted as a special Estimate, or is it to be put in the ordinary Estimates? I hope it is not to be given away in the shape of a loan. I hope it will be asked for at the hands of the British taxpayer by a direct Vote, and unless we get some more satisfactory explanation on this point showing that the districts to which the money is to be paid are really congested and impoverished, and requiring Imperial subvention, and unless, also, we are informed how the money is to be obtained, I for one shall feel it my duty to oppose the introduction of the Bills.

Mr. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): We have had large experience of drainage and other public works in Ireland, for many millions have been spent on such schemes, and there is nothing but failure and wreck on every side. Only recently the Land Commissioners have been forced to value as flooded lands lands on which two or three millions had been spent for drainage, so there we have an instance of the inutility of many of these works. Now I look upon these Bills also from another point of view. Their inception is entirely due to the Government, who have excluded from the examination of the scheme everybody Nationalist. No Irish Members on the Nationalist benches have been allowed to have anything to do with the schemes, which are to be carried out by people who have no interest in the country, and who have no experience in these matters. Then, look at the Commissioners who are to be appointed. We find that they do not command the respect of the people of Ireland for such purposes as these. I repeat that the whole of the scheme is to be carried out without any reference to the representatives of Ireland and to the opinions of the Irish people, and we have the fact that similar schemes which have been tried in the past have proved failures, so that we may now judge how the money is likely to be squandered. I look upon the whole of this scheme as a political and Party bribe, and I find that already some of the newspapers are seeking to give the Government credit for the action they are taking in these matters. Looking at this proposed expenditure as a bribe, and bearing in mind how the public money is likely to be wasted, and for the reason that we have no hand in the business, but are absolutely excluded from it, I am sorry to say I shall feel it my duty, as at present advised, to offer strenuous opposition to this waste and squandering of public of money, and to the necessary increase on taxation on the people without any equivalent being forthcoming.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): No doubt it is an exceedingly pleasant thing to spend other people's money. Under this Bill a very large sum belonging to the British taxpayer is to be spent, and while it is being spent, things will go on with the greatest smoothness. But nobody on whom the money is expended will give the smallest thanks to Her Majesty's Government. Until the people are called upon to pay the taxes which will be necessary to recoup the Government, all will go on very pleasantly, and no one will object to the way in which the money is squandered. But as soon as the taxes are wanted, those who are the most complacent now will protest and shout the loudest. Forty years ago there was a scheme for the navigation and drainage of the Bann, and large sums of money were foolishly wasted in mixing up those two objects. I do not see why the present taxpayers should be called upon to pay for the money which was thrown away then. The Government seem to me, in dealing with this question, to have commenced at the wrong end. If we had a Local Government Act in operation in Ireland, there would be somebody with local knowledge who would be able to say what works were desirable, and whether the proposed expenditure is discreet and proper. The Bill proposes that the taxpayers should have power to veto the scheme, but it provides no machinery by which an expression of the opinion of the people can be obtained. For these reasons I regard the measure as objectionable, but there is also another, and that is that the people who reside in the valley of the

Bann are not badly off. The valley is an exceedingly wealthy one, and if they are willing, the tenants are perfectly well able to bear the expense of draining the land without coming to this House for assistance. Of course they are backed up on this occasion by certain Members of Parliament, who want to make a little capital by posing as their friends and saying, "See what fine fellows we are, and what a good thing we have got for you out of the British taxpayer." But I do not think that the Government ought to buy support in that manner. When a Local Government Bill has been passed it will be time enough to say whether there shall be a drainage scheme or not, and what parts of the country shall be taxed for the cost of it. I shall certainly support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Camborne.

MR. W. HARRIS (Galway, E.): I entirely differ from my hon. Friend who has just spoken, and I think that £380,000 is the smallest sum which the Government could propose for drainage works in Ireland. I have given great attention to this question of drainage, and I believe that a sum of £20,000,000 will be required before the necessary works are properly carried out. I am certainly astonished at the opposition which has been given to the expenditure of so small a sum of money, especially when it is known that it will give employment in the neighbourhood, and be beneficial to everybody. I should not have thought that the English Radicals would have been so exceedingly anxious about the expenditure of this small sum. Mr. Giffen told us at the time the Home Rule Bill was introduced, that Ireland was paying £6,000,000 a year more than she ought to pay in the shape of Imperial taxation. If that statement is true, it is absurd to say that the small sum of money involved in this scheme will come out of the pockets of the general taxpayer. I am glad to hear from my hon. Friend the Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) that the tenants who live on the banks of the Bann are prosperous. At the same time, I am afraid that a good deal of nonsense is talked about the prosperity of the North of Ireland. There are a great number of persons there who are very poor indeed, and I think it would be most undesirable to spend money on the Shannon and the Suck, and leave out the North of Ireland. So far as the prosperity of the North is concerned, the more prosperous it is the better I shall like it. Hitherto there has been a considerable amount of bungling in regard to these drainage questions by the engineers and the Board of Works, and I should be glad if the Government would consent to the appointment of a Committee to ascertain the best way of carrying this scheme into effect. At present we have only reached the first stage of the Bill, and I sincerely hope that no obstruction will be given to its progress on this side of the House. I do not understand why we should hesitate to accept from the Government any measure that is likely to increase the prosperity of the country. I shall certainly vote for the Bill, and I hope that the Party of which I am a member will do the same.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): As I represent a county which is much affected by this Bill, I desire to say a word or two upon it. No doubt the money formerly granted was entirely thrown away. The works were carried out in such a way that tens of thousands of acres were flooded. Instead of being of service to the people they were disastrous, and the tenants were taxed for having their lands flooded. I should like, therefore, to know what security the Government propose to give that their present performance is not to be a repetition of the former wasteful one. What assurance have we that after the money has been squandered the people of Ireland will not be taxed to repay it? We have certainly no confidence in the machinery by which it is proposed to carry out these works. Are the persons who are to expend the money and to carry out the works elected by the people? Not a bit of it. There is not a man who will not be nominated by some clique at Dublin Castle. For instance, one of the persons who will control the navigation of the Bann is a gentleman who resides 400 miles from its mouth, who knows nothing about it, and is merely a retail draper in the City of Dublin. We do not believe in him, we do not trust him; and I maintain that he is not a man to entrust with the spending of the public money. After a year or two, when failure stares

us in the face, and complaints are made that the money has been spent to no purpose, we shall be told that the blame rests upon us, because we had a hand in voting it. If anything goes wrong, to whom are we to appeal? Are we to appeal to this House? So far as I can make out, there is no machinery for an appeal in the event of anything going wrong. Not long ago I was in a place where the Board of Works, who will probably have a good deal to do with the spending of this money, had built a breakwater within a reef at a point which the water very rarely reached. As a rule, the money which has been granted for the improvement of Ireland has been spent by an irresponsible body, whom neither the ratepayers nor the Irish would trust. For these reasons I cannot fall in with the view of my hon. Friend the Member for Galway (Mr. Harris) that it is desirable to vote this money, and I think that no public money ought to be expended without very careful supervision. For my part, I would not sanction the expenditure of one farthing of the public money unless I felt assured that satisfactory results would accrue.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I agree, in a large measure, with some of the criticisms which have been passed upon this scheme by my hon. Friends on these Benches. There can be no doubt that many thousands of pounds have been spent in Ireland upon such works as are proposed to be provided by this Bill, and that the money has been absolutely wasted. Indeed, the country is studded all over with monuments to the disgrace of the Governments which planned the works, and of the Boards of public bodies which carried them out. Moreover, a certain amount of demoralization has been produced among the people by the expenditure. I entirely agree with the view of my hon. Friend the Member for King's County (Mr. Molloy) that this is a political bribe. It is only right that the people should understand that the £380,000 to be expended under this Bill is part of the price which Great Britain has to pay for the Union. There is no doubt that Ireland ought to make provision for its own public works as England and Scotland should do for theirs, but so long as you insist on retaining the management of Irish affairs in your own hands, so long, at all events, will my voice never be raised to stop the expenditure in Ireland of these hundreds of thousands of pounds. It is the same with all other expenditure. The Estimates presented every year are perfectly disgraceful. Enormous salaries are provided, and a large staff of civil servants employed, and it is well understood that the system is part of the price which this country has to pay for maintaining the present system of Government. It is said that Ireland ought to provide for its own wants, but it ought not to be forgotten that, although that is a good general principle, yet Great Britain owes a considerable debt to Ireland. Even the Chief Secretary has told us that England owes a large debt to Ireland for the destruction it has caused in past centuries of the Irish industries. That fact ought not to be forgotten, and, therefore, it does not affect my conscience that these large sums of money should be voted for Irish purposes which, under other circumstances, would be provided for by Ireland herself. I rose, however, for the purpose of making a suggestion. I think it will be a great misfortune if, in carrying out these works, precautions are not taken by the Government to prevent a wasteful expenditure, and, therefore, I would suggest that the Bill should be sent to a Select Committee not composed in the usual way, but composed wholly or mainly of Irish Members. I believe that this is a matter in which the Ulster Members will sympathize with us, and there are certainly hon. Members on that side of the House who understand the circumstances of the river district of the Bann much better than any English, Scotch, or Welsh Member in this House. I think it would be almost an insult to the Irish people to have a scheme of this kind thrust upon the House without consulting a single Irish Member as to its provisions. I am afraid that no suggestion which comes from this side of the House will have much effect upon the Government; but, at all events, I would suggest that this is a matter which should be sent to a Select Committee composed principally of Irish Members.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): Before the Motion is put, I desire to say a few

words. I am afraid they must be words of a general character. Of course, I applaud the action of the Government in bringing forward a measure dealing with what undoubtedly are the very pressing wants and necessities of Ireland. But at the same time I am bound to confess, having regard to the experience of the past, that I do not entertain any great degree of hope. If this House is going to undertake seriously the task of improving the industrial resources of Ireland, we should require to have a separate Minister responsible to Parliament, upon whom the eye of public opinion could fall, and who could be especially charged with the work. There is no country in the world of the same area where there is greater scope for industrial improvement than Ireland. It cannot be said that the Chief Secretary, so far as I have ever heard, whatever his capacity and qualifications may be, has specially devoted himself to the technical questions involved in the Bill under discussion and the larger Bill relating to industrial improvement; hence it will happen that we, or those who desire to follow the progress of these Bills, will be obliged to take hold of the right hon. Gentleman and to ask him to devote a small portion of his leisure to this particular branch of Irish work. I very much fear that the result of this legislation will be disappointment to the right hon. Gentleman and his Party, to the Irish tenants, who hope to benefit, and to the British taxpayers, who, to some extent, are bound to be the losers, and not the gainers, by the transaction. I should like also to say that before you can hope to deal with this question of the industrial improvement of Ireland, it will be necessary to alter the entire system of Local Government in that country, and especially to replace the present Board of Works either by a Minister or an elected body, which would be responsible to public opinion. It is a mere putting of the cart before the horse for the right hon. Gentleman to suppose that he can construct any off-hand system of representative opinion in the localities affected, which would supply the want of a complete system of Local Government. But if I go further afield, and beyond the fringe of industrial improvement, and come to any real development of the resources of that country, I see that you want a great deal more than Local Government—that you want a Parliament, before you can ever hope to develop the superabundant resources which wait for development in Ireland. However, I do not propose to go further into the question of either local self-government or national self-government, except to say that I, for one, desire that the investment of British credit in Ireland may be a remunerative one, or, if it cannot be a remunerative one, that it may, at all events, be a satisfactory one in the sense of being an investment which will result in some good for Ireland, if it does not bring back to the pocket of the British taxpayer interest on the money expended. I fear in the very crude measures under consideration we shall only tread the oft-trodden path of repeated failure under the Local Government Board of Ireland. Our Irish coasts are strewn with monuments of the absurd incapacity of the so called Irish Board of Works in matters of engineering. They seem incapable of dealing with the simplest engineering problem. Whether it is that they desire to make money go a long way, or whether it is that they are removed from observation, the result is the same. Whether the works are fishing piers, the deepening of rivers, or larger operations, the complaint always is that the money has been wasted, and that the works provided are insufficient and useless for the purpose for which they were originally designed. I am glad the Government are spending money in Ireland, however, and glad that they represent a rich nation which is able to afford the expense, and that when the money has been thrown into the rivers or seas, as the case may be, it will not prove an irremediable misfortune for the constituency of the right hon. Gentleman or this great and wealthy nation. No doubt, if the safeguards adopted in other countries where a normal state of public affairs exists could be adopted, expenditure of this kind would be most prudent, but under the present circumstances I can only say—and we desire to deal with the right hon. Gentleman candidly—we do not wish the Government to walk into this expenditure with their eyes shut. Whatever they do let them do it with fore-

sight, with a knowledge of the danger and almost certainty of failure. Before I sit down I desire to ask one question. The right hon. Gentleman has told us that in those cases where the tenants are taxed it will not be left to the landlords to charge them any increase of tax in the form of rent on their improvements. I want to ask on what principle that safeguard to the tenants is to be calculated? Is it to be calculated on the principle contained in the Land Act of 1881? An almost identical clause occurs there to the effect that no rent is to be made payable in respect of improvements made by the tenant on his predecessors in title. I wish to know if the same principle is to be carried out in this Bill, because, if it is, it will be a useless one. In the case of the Land Act of 1881, the Supreme Appellate Court discovered a principle called "the improvable capability of the land." The Court held that a tenant was only to be shielded from increased rent, for as far as the amount of money expended on making the improvements went, but that the increased value to the land resulting from the improvable capacity of the land should go to the landlord. Where, at a cost of £20 the letting value of the land is increased from £20 a year to £100, the tenant, according to the decision in the case of Adams and Dunseath, is only entitled to so much of the increment as is represented by the amount expended —that is to say, £20—and the remaining £60 gives to the landlord. In other words, the landlord is entitled to raise the tenant's rent from £20 to £80. It would be absurd under this Bill to confine the tenant's interest in the proposed improvements to the amount of the loan granted for the purpose of effecting the improvements; and if the right hon. Gentleman says this Bill contains a real provision to protect the tenants, then he is on the horns of a dilemma, for he ought at once to remedy the defect in the Act of 1881.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know whether the hon. Member expects me to deal with the various matters he has referred to. He has brought in the problem of Home Rule and our old friend "Adams *v.* Dunseath." I do not at all admit that the framers of the Bill are on the horns of a dilemma. These works will be carried out largely by Government gift and by Government loan. With regard to the part of the cost for which the tenants are made responsible, the landlord is entirely excluded from the benefits which will accrue to the tenants. There is no parity of reasoning between the case of the tenants under the present Bill and that of the tenants under the Act of 1881. The provisions of this Bill will make the tenants absolutely secure.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, and Mr. Jackson.

Bill presented and read first time. [Bill 257.]

BARROW DRAINAGE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur Balfour, Bill for the improvement of the drainage of land, and for the prevention of inundations within the catchment area of the River Barrow; and for other purposes relating thereto, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, and Mr. Jackson.

Bill presented and read first time. [Bill 258.]

SHANNON DRAINAGE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur Balfour, Bill for the improvement of the drainage lands, and for the prevention of inundations within the catchment area of the River Shannon; and for other purposes relating thereto, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, and Mr. Jackson.

Bill presented and read first time. [Bill 259.]

SUCK DRAINAGE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur Balfour, Bill for extending the time for the completion of the works under certain Acts authorized to be executed within the River Suck Drainage District; for providing money for defraying costs, charges, and expenses incurred by the Drainage Board for such district; and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, and Mr. Jackson.

Bill presented and read first time. [Bill 260.]

LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND).

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Sir, I now beg to move for leave to introduce the fifth of the measures which I have placed upon the Paper, embodying the scheme of the Government for improving the industrial resources of Ireland. It will be in the recollection and knowledge of the House that in 1883 an Act, which was known as the Tramways (Ireland) Act, was passed by the Government of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), and, I think, under the auspices of the right hon. Member for Bridgeton (Sir G. Trevelyan). It is upon the basis of that Act, though largely differing from it in some of its main provisions, that the chief part of the scheme I have the honour to introduce is ultimately founded. Under that Act a capital sum corresponding to an annual outlay of £40,000 was authorized to be expended upon the construction of tramways and light railways. I suppose that such an annual outlay would represent a capital sum of about £1,333,000. Under the Act of 1883 seven railways have actually been completed and are in operation at an expenditure corresponding to an annual outlay of £10,290. Seven more railways have practically gone through all their preliminary stages, and the Treasury are pledged to provide money for them. There will then be left a capital sum still to be disposed of under the old Tramways Act corresponding to an annual outlay of £18,000. Therefore, rather more than half the money provided by the Act of 1883 has already been expended. Now, Sir, the Act of 1883 has been fruitful in good results and may yet be fruitful in further good results, but experience has shown that in many respects it is defective, and that there are in it many provisions which may with advantage be amended. The Government are of opinion that, besides amending the Act of 1883, we ought to bring in at the same time some plan, framed in some respects on essentially different lines, for dealing with the poorer and more congested districts of Ireland. The scheme of the Government divides itself naturally into two parts, the first being Amendments in matters of detail of the Act of 1883, and the other being the new scheme that the Government desire to bring into operation for extending railways through the congested districts in the West of Ireland. I propose to deal with these two parts in the order in which I have named them. The first matter of detail in which, I think, the provisions of the Act of 1883 ought to be altered relates to the time at which the Treasury guarantee is repaid to the Local Authority. Under the Act of 1883, when the locality has paid its guarantee of, say, 5 per cent to the promoters, it is allowed to come to the Treasury and ask for repayment of a portion of that sum, which I may roughly put at 2 per cent. In the first half-year the Treasury has got half a year behind in the payment of that 2 per cent, and has remained so. I do not see any reason why that should be continued. The Treasury, I think it was in 1884, expressed its perfect willingness to get over the difficulty, and they were only prevented from doing so because the terms of the statute of 1883 would have rendered it illegal. We propose now to put that right. The second point is, in some respects, of more importance. Under the old Act it is possible, I believe, to have no less than three or four persons, who are sometimes called auditors and sometimes arbitrators, charged with the investigation of the accounts. All those practically acquainted with the working of the Act are of opinion that this arrangement led to unnecessary expense and difficulty, and I therefore propose to substitute for the auditors and arbitrators a single auditor who will be appointed by the Board of Trade. The third Amendment I propose to make in the Act of 1883 is to confer somewhat greater elasticity upon the definition of the word "capital," as used in that Act. I believe it is not in the power of the Privy Council to allow capital to be used for the purpose of paying interest during the construction of a tramway. I think that is an unduly rigid application of the word "capital," which does not really lead to economy in the construction of the line, and which renders it more difficult to obtain promoters and companies which will successfully carry out the undertaking. The fourth matter of detail on which I propose to amend the Act relates to the Standing Orders, if I may so describe them, which were laid down by the Act of 1860, which wa

the original Act dealing with tramways in Ireland. Under the provisions of that Act, as modified by the Act of 1883, all undertakings in regard to tramways in Ireland have to be carried into effect. There is no discretion left to the bodies before whom those schemes are discussed to alter any matters of detail. We propose to give power to amend any errors that may be committed, and to give to the bodies before whom the schemes are discussed power to suspend the Standing Rules. We further propose to grant powers to raise new capital under substantially the same guarantees as were placed by statute on the raising of the original capital. It sometimes happens that the original capital proves insufficient for the undertaking, and that additional capital becomes necessary. I do not think it ought to be made too easy to raise fresh capital; otherwise we shall lend ourselves to extravagant administration, but, under the guarantee the Government propose to impose, I do not think any danger will be incurred. The sixth main alteration we suggest is that facilities should be given to promote working arrangements between one tramway company and another, between tramway and light railway and between light railway and other railway companies. There are no powers under existing Acts of Parliament for carrying out such arrangements, and that state of facts results in great inconvenience. We also proposed that all tramways under the Act of 1883 should be placed for certain purposes under the jurisdiction of the Railway Commission. Now, Sir, I have enumerated the main points in which we think we may amend the details of the Act of 1883. There is one question connected with both the first part and the second part of the Bill upon which the House will expect me to say a few words—namely, the much-vexed question of the comparative merits of the broad and the narrow gauge. Not only theorists but practical men have differed on this point. I believe promoters of tramways and light railways were not allowed under Lord Spencer's Government to have the narrow gauge. The Commission appointed in 1887 reported strongly in favour of the broad gauge. Undoubtedly strong arguments have been urged in favour of the broad gauge. The advocates of the broad gauge say perfectly truly that it affords the necessity of transshipment at the point of junction between the narrow and the broad gauge, with the consequent reduction of cost and inconvenience, and also the avoidance of risk of damage to the more perishable kinds of goods. It is also said that the broad gauge is far more convenient because it is necessary to keep on a light railway as large a quantity of rolling stock as will meet every possible emergency, it being impossible to supplement the stock from any other source; and, further, it is alleged that the broad gauge is not really much more expensive. On the other hand, I have received strong representations on the other side from persons who are practically acquainted with the actual working of some of the lines already constructed. They say that the cost of transshipment does not amount to more than 3d. per ton, and sometimes to only 2½d., and that it is an illusion to suppose that fresh fish are materially injured by such transshipment. They add that transshipment must occur between the light railway and the main trunk line even if both are on the same gauge, and they deny the allegation that the narrow gauges are not much cheaper. Upon these and various other auguments they put in a strong plea why the Government should insert in the Bill some provision in contradiction to the recommendations of the Royal Commission and in favour of the narrow gauge. The Government have, perhaps, taken a somewhat cowardly course in this matter. Feeling the arguments differ so widely, they have left it open in the Bill as to what kind of gauge should be adopted. Next I come to the important provisions which deal with the suggestions as to promoting railways in the poorer parts of Ireland. Under the Act of 1883, the Treasury never came into direct contact with the promoters, nor are they responsible to them. Though the Treasury give a guarantee, it is not a direct guarantee to the promoters, but a guarantee behind the barony guarantee and dependent on it. I did not think he should be justified in asking the Treasury to relax that principle with regard to the northern parts of Ireland, but I think I may ask the Treasury to relax it when dealing with the poorer and congested districts, because the result of that prin-

ciple is that the locality has to pay much more in order that the necessary capital may be raised than it would if the Treasury gathered directly. Broadly speaking, the credit of the localities in Ireland does not enable them to go into the money market and get better terms than 5 per cent, even though the Treasury guarantee is behind them. In the present Bill the Government propose, in dealing with the congested districts, to make the guarantee direct, and therefore enable the money to be raised practically at 3 per cent. A proposal which brings the Treasury directly into contact with the promoters of the line no doubt requires justification, and I find that justification really and solely in the poverty of the districts with which we have to deal. The population over a large part of the West of Ireland, as the House well knows, is crowded along the seashore, where they can obtain seaweed for manure; they till land of poor quality, often much over-crowded, and always remote from means of communication. I believe that if Parliament could give them the advantage of these railways, we should not only increase the actual value of their holdings by bringing their agricultural produce into some proximity with the market, but we should do a great deal to foster that industry whose prosperity is so near the heart of every man interested in the welfare of Ireland—the fishing industry. I have lately been told that a 3lb. haddock caught off the coast of Donegal actually sells for a halfpenny, simply because the district is 20 or 30 miles from a railway. That, then, is my justification for the proposal with regard to the Treasury. I have even larger hopes, because I cannot help thinking that if by means of this plan we can bring these people into closer contact with the outer world and raise the standard of being amongst them, we shall by natural means promote that emigration from local districts which I am certain every impartial observer, whatever his views, cannot but regard in his heart as the greatest blessing. With regard to financial machinery, the Royal Commission reported strongly in favour of encouraging in every way the existing railways to be promoters, and the Government strongly concur in that recommendation; and we go a good deal further in some respects. We should desire, without going to the locality for anything, that the Treasury should be able to induce existing railway companies to construct, to maintain, and to work lines through these congested districts, and, in order to effect that object, we propose that the Treasury should have power to negotiate with the railway companies for this purpose, giving the Treasury the very widest latitude with regard to the terms which they may offer. They may give to the railway companies the whole or any part of the money which may be thought necessary in order to induce them to carry out this object. Of course in any contract of that kind it will be absolutely necessary for the railway company on their side to engage to maintain and work the line. Be it observed that the lines through the districts in question are not likely to be lucrative. Where they are likely to be remunerative assistance is not wanted; but where they are not remunerative, and where they may not even for some years pay working expenses, it is specially necessary for the Treasury to come forward with the money. [An hon. MEMBER: As a gift?] As a gift. But it is perfectly possible the railway company may prove unreasonable, and that the Treasury may not be able to come to terms with them. We, therefore, propose to have two strings to our bow. We propose to retain the power of granting to promoters other than railway companies the amount of money which they require to construct a line. If that is done, the line, of course, will be constructed on cash principles, and those who construct it will get 3 per cent certain. But what is to happen under these circumstances if the working expenses of the line exceed the receipts? If the railway company construct the line that point will not arise. But in the other case it is absolutely necessary to have a baronial, or rather a local, guarantee. In 1883, the local guarantee was used for two purposes. It was used to pay the interest promised to the promoters of the line; and it was also used to supplement any deficiency that might arise in the working expenses of the line. The Government do not propose to ask these poor localities to pay anything in respect of the first of these

objects, the baronial guarantee in other words, will not go to pay any part of the cost of the original construction of the line, but we do propose to ask for the baronial guarantee up to a certain fixed amount, which shall in no case exceed 6d. in the pound, in order to enable them to meet any deficiency on the working expenses of the line. I stated just now that, although the guarantee under our scheme was a local one, it was not a baronial. Under the Act of 1883, the taxation for the purpose of constructing the line cannot be spread over a smaller area than a barony, and the result has been, and very likely will be in the future, that parts of the barony are taxed that benefit either not at all, or in an insignificant measure. We do not think that a good plan; and we propose, therefore, with regard to these railways constructed in congested districts, to tax for the limited purpose I have described only the area which is benefited by the railway. It is further proposed that the amount of the tax shall be limited to a sum to be fixed beforehand, and that it shall not in any single instance exceed 6d. We further propose that, before the locality is asked even to accept this limited liability for this limited purpose, the popular opinion of the ratepayers shall be taken and they shall have the right, if they please, to reject the scheme. Of course it is impossible to ask the Treasury to give money on these terms without limiting the amount so given. We propose, therefore, that the capital which may be used under this Act shall be a capital sum representing £20,000 a year, and in no case is it to exceed £600,000.

COLONEL NOLAN: Not enough.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and gallant Gentleman says it is not enough. When it is expended Parliament may if it thinks fit give more. The sum of £600,000 in addition to the amount given under the Act of 1883 is not an ungenerous gift, and the terms under which it is given are certainly not niggardly. Of course, under a plan which provides that the Government is practically to supply the whole cost of construction of the line, it is necessary to give the Government powers to determine between what points and through what country the line is to be constructed. Under the Act of 1883, there is no power to select between the different schemes advanced in different parts of the country; but in this case we have retained the right to decide which scheme is to be taken first. I do not know that I need go more into the details at this stage of the Bill. I may say, however, that the congested districts will have to be scheduled, and this work will probably be done by the Local Government Board. Under the five schemes which the Government have thus brought forward with regard to public works, the sum of £385,000 is given to drainage, and £600,000 to railways in congested districts. The total sum given as a free gift, wholly irrespective of loan, is practically a million sterling. I think it would be admitted that the Government have approached this problem in no narrow or niggardly spirit. I venture to hope, in spite of the criticisms which have been poured upon me from below the Gangway opposite this evening, that it will also be felt that we have taken some pains to secure that the money which we are asking the Treasury to give with no stinted hand, shall be expended in a manner profitable to the community for whose benefit we intend it. After the reception which the Drainage Bills have met—a reception which, except in one case, I have no reason to complain of—I hope I may appeal to the House not to approach the Railway Bill in any Party spirit. We live in an embittered atmosphere of controversy with regard to the Irish question. I suppose that is inevitable, and being inevitable it will, and must, extend itself, to a certain extent, to any proposal which this or any Government may make with regard to public works in Ireland. But one statement has been advanced upon which I should like to make an observation. We have been told that the Government desire by these measures to buy support. [MR. BIGGAR: Hear, hear.] That may be the view of the hon. Member for Cavan and the other hon. Gentleman who cheered—the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir G. Campbell)—but I, on behalf of my colleagues, beg absolutely to repudiate the suggestion. If it had been the intention of the Government to buy support by measures of this kind, we could not have made a more idiotic proposal. [MR. BIGGAR: Hear, hear.] The hon.

Member for Cavan is perfectly right. I listened with great interest to his speech. He told us that probably when these works were completed, the amount of gratitude the Government would receive for them would be comparatively small. I believe it will; and this million sterling is not intended by the Government as a means of purchasing gratitude. What we hope for is that we will be able to do something to solve the most difficult part of the Irish question. Some parts of the Irish question hon. Gentlemen opposite think they can solve by changing the method of Government in Ireland. I will not argue that point. But do not let any man in his senses attempt to tell me that a modification of the machinery by which Ireland is governed is going to help solve the question of the congested districts in Ireland. After the reception which the less popular scheme dealing with drainage has met with from hon. Gentlemen opposite, I am not without hope that they may do the Government the justice to believe that in bringing these schemes forward, and in asking the taxpayers to make a sacrifice, which I admit to be a large one in amount and one of a very novel kind, they are animated by as sincere a desire for the welfare of Ireland as hon. Gentlemen are who profess specially to have the interests of that country committed to their keeping.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to facilitate the construction of Light Railways in Ireland."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

*SIR G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I certainly am quite as much adverse to attempting to make any Party capital out of this question as I am to making a speech on the First Reading of a Bill. The Secretary for Ireland has in no way exceeded his rights on this occasion, and I am sure that every one who has listened to the right hon. Gentleman will agree that he has given a clear exposition of the matter before us. I wish, however, to ask one or two questions. I gathered that the right hon. Gentleman proposes to make a guarantee of 2 per cent for the whole of Ireland.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not propose to touch the relations between the locality and the promoters as they exist under the Act of 1883 with regard to Ireland generally, but entirely to modify them with regard to the congested districts.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN: I thought the right hon. Gentleman proposed to make a 2 per cent guarantee. [MR. A. J. BALFOUR signified dissent.] Then I was mistaken. With regard to the Amendments of the Act, which I took some share in passing in 1883, I may say that they are all extremely carefully considered and extremely practical. It appears to me that we are giving the money, for this is a gift. It is not like the guarantee of the Indian railways, for although the money might be in some cases a gift, yet in no case did it profess to be a gift, because the State looks forward to the time when even the Madras railways may pay. But if the State is to give money, I would very much rather give it in the shape of railways than in the shape of drainage. Considering the certainty that this £600,000 will be used for the benefit of the country, the more than uncertainty that the £383,000 will be used for the benefit of Ireland, and the still greater uncertainty that this will be the last public money to be sunk in the drainage of the Suck and the other Irish rivers, I must say that the hopes I entertain from this Bill will render me much more unwilling to accept the Drainage Bills until something more is known about their past and their future than is known at present. I hope the House will agree to this Bill. If it does so, however, it will have to find some arguments to distinguish between the West of Ireland and the West of Scotland, and those arguments will not be easily found, and I am glad of it. What interests me about the measure so much is that it is a carefully drawn Bill, and the sum is a limited one. I hope the money will be doled out in such a manner that we shall be able to discover what amount of money is required to give this great advantage to a district like the West of Ireland. If the West of Ireland can be provided with these light railways for anything like £600,000, then I think we should be induced to apply the same remedy to districts which are almost in every respect—economically, socially, and in some serious aspects politically—in the same position as the West of

Ireland. I think that the Crofter Members would do well to watch the debates with very great care, and to watch with still greater care in order to see what practical advantage the West of Ireland gets from a scheme which, I believe, is one of the very best that has been brought forward for its benefit.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): This Bill is not unlike the Bill which I had the honour to introduce some time ago—the Light Tramways Bill. I trust, however, that it will meet with a better fate, seeing that my hon. Friend the Member for Cavan was most effectual in blocking the Bill which I brought in. The chief point in this Bill is the direct nature of the guarantee; the weak point of the old Bill was the indirect nature of the guarantee. The Government guaranteed 2 per cent and surrounded it with all sorts of contingencies. I think the Chief Secretary will only be half doing his work if he does not extend the direct guarantee to the other districts of Ireland—not only to the congested districts, but to the other portions of the scheduled districts in the West of Ireland, so that money may be raised upon a much lower rate of interest. So far as the general result goes, I think it is an extremely good scheme for those districts which will be lucky enough to get the advantage of it. I do not represent Connemara, but I gather from the remarks of the Chief Secretary that the Bill will apply specially to the districts that lead to the sea coast. The right hon. Gentleman has not said whether he is going to endorse the whole of the engineer's scheme or simply to adopt the narrow-gauge plan, which, although it involves a break of gauge, will certainly enable the money to go much further. It is quite clear that if we are going to have a railway from Galway to Clifton, one in Kerry, another in Donegal, and another in Mayo, the money will not go round. On the whole, I think the guarantee is a fair one, and it provides that no district shall pay more than 6d. in the pound. I believe, myself, that these railways will pay the working expenses and recoup the Government for the money they propose to advance, if they are made economically. The Chief Secretary's sketch of the Bill is satisfactory, but I do not think that it ought to be discussed upon the question of gratitude. When it is remembered that Ireland pays £8,000,000 a year in taxation, and only gets back £1,000,000 in the course of five or six years, there is no necessity to talk of gratitude. Large sums of money, measured by tens and hundreds of millions, are spent at Woolwich and Portsmouth, and there is nothing on a corresponding scale to be found in connection with Ireland. This Bill simply gives back to Ireland a little of her own money, and very little too.

*SIR J. M'KENNA (Monaghan, S.): I hope that the right hon. Gentleman if he accepts the railway companies as promoters of the new undertaking, will not hold out to them that they are to get a guarantee from the baronies for the working expenses.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I expressly excluded that.

*SIR J. M'KENNA: I give the right hon. Gentleman the greatest credit for his scheme, and I believe that the proper persons to guarantee the construction of these railways are the existing companies with whose lines the railways now proposed will be brought into connection, and who will be benefited by the traffic. It would be a great mistake to suppose that the profit on railway extensions is confined to earnings on the new mileage. The chief profit is derived from increased traffic on the old lines. There is another point which I wish to remark upon, namely, that in regard to a Government grant of this kind, I think it should not be spoken of as a gift; it is nothing of the kind. The Irish people are entitled to just and generous treatment in return for the disproportionate amount of taxes they have had to pay, as I shall very briefly point out. In the first 50 years after the Union, Ireland contributed £200,000,000 to the Imperial Revenue, that is to say, at the rate of £4,000,000 a year. There then came what I designate a period of transition—five years during which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian made a new departure, placing fresh burdens on Ireland. In the following 25 years (1856 80, both inclusive), she contributed £7,000,000 a year in fact three millions a year more than she had to pay under the obligations imposed upon her by the infamous Act of Union. I am not, however, denouncing the Union at present; I use

the phrase rhetorically to point out how much worse we have been dealt with since 1853 than for the first 50 years of the Union, no matter how bad it was. Ireland paid £60,000,000 more than her legitimate share in the 25 years, and the injustice continues. The result is that if you measure all the taxation of Ireland, the annual Imperial taxation of that country will be found to be at the rate of 5s. 4d. in the pound on the whole incomes of Ireland, whereas the entire Imperial taxation of England would not equal an income tax of 2s. 6d. in the pound on the total of English incomes. Having said this, however, I must add, I wish the Government every success in their new scheme.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: As I ventured to cheer a remark of the right hon. Gentleman I desire to explain why I did so. I have not the same objection to the Bill before the House as I had to the Drainage Bills. I have an objection to give money to improve one of the richest districts of Ireland as we are told the Valley of the Bann is, but where you are dealing with congested districts I do not see the same objection, and therefore I do not intend to oppose the introduction of the present Bill. I trust that my right hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division is right in his idea that there is to be nothing in the nature of a guarantee such as has been given in the case of the Indian Railways. To relieve the congested districts of Scotland or Ireland at the public expense is quite a different thing from benefiting one of the richest districts in Ireland at the public expense.

MR. BIGGAR: In my view the Government are merely introducing the Bill to distract attention from the state of things in Ireland, and to provoke Irish discussions of a different kind from those to which we have been accustomed. Under these circumstances the House would do well to scrutinize the projects of the Government narrowly. The Chief Secretary has made the peculiar admission that by the Act of 1883 great injustice was done to a considerable proportion of the ratepayers, and if this is so, ought any extension of the system which came in under that Act to be granted? I believe that not more than one or two of the schemes in operation pay their working expenses. We have heard a good deal in regard to the Irish fisheries. There is a fishing town which for a long time has had direct communication with Galway, but nevertheless it is far from prosperous, in spite of the good railway communication which it possesses, and it cannot be worked profitably. The fishing population are exceedingly badly off, and the Government refuse to put a stop to trawling. There is a railway from the town of Ennis to Miltown Malbay, and yet in the course of from six to twelve months only three tons of fish have been carried over it. Experience has proved that the new light railways are really of no service in the carrying of fish; the only real occupation for them is found in what is done on fair and market days. I hope the Government will allow nothing but the broad gauge lines to be built. The fallacy of the schemes is, to my mind, the paying of interest out of capital during the progress of the works. The old fashion was to pay dividends out of profits, but the new system is to pay dividends out of capital, and to put a tax upon those who have to find the guarantee. The only real occupation for the new railway will be with the traffic on fair and market days, and the rolling stock required for this purpose will be idle for 28 days out of the 31, and if rolling stock is to be borrowed from some distant places then nothing but a broad gauge line should be sanctioned. I am glad the Bill is introduced. It will afford us the opportunity of amending the Act of 1883. When that Act was passed it was originally projected that the Government should give 2 per cent and the local ratepayers 2 per cent, but through the pressure of a swindling syndicate I believe, and at the instance of a then hon. Member of this House, Captain O'Shea, the guarantee was raised to 5 per cent, the extra 1 per cent coming out of the pockets of credulous and unfortunate ratepayers. But I do not oppose the introduction of the Bill. I do not see that any substantial injury will be done except to the British taxpayers, who will be simply plundered a little more.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say when the Bill will be distributed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot say, but I will undertake that no time shall be lost.

Question put, and agreed to.

LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND.)

On Motion of Mr. Arthur Balfour Bill to facilitate the construction of Light Railway in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, and Mr. Jackson. [Bill 261.]

Bill presented and read first time.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

CLASS II.

£5,000, Mercantile Marine Fund (grant in aid).

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I have given notice of a Motion to reduce the amount of the grant by £5,000. I think the time has fully arrived when inquiry should be made into the peculiar administration of this very peculiar fund. I do not know whether the Committee really understand the nature of the Mercantile Marine Fund. Up to 1842 all the lighthouses around our coasts were wholly under the administration of private corporations and private individuals. There were no fewer than some 50 private rights which had been granted by different Sovereigns and different Parliaments, and dues were levied under those grants out of which those private individuals made large fortunes. In 1842 those private rights were bought up by the Trinity Board, with the result that in future all the lighthouses around the coast were in the hands of the Trinity Board, the Scotch Commissioners, and the Irish Commissioners of Lights. Up to 1853 practically no control was exercised over their administration. Dues were levied at their will and pleasure, and the accumulations went into what was practically a private purse. But in 1852 Mr. Disraeli in his Budget statement called attention to the administration of these Light Dues and the complaints made by the shipping interest as to the way in which they were administered. Thereupon in the next year Mr. Cardwell, the President of the Board of Trade, allowing Trinity House to retain all its accumulations, invented what is now called the Mercantile Marine Fund, requiring that all Light Dues should be paid into this particular fund and that they should be used for particular and special purposes. But even then, as the money was not voted by Parliament, Parliament had not sufficient and direct control over the administration, and it was not until 1882 that the control of Parliament was actually brought into play. In 1882 Parliamentary control arose in the following manner. Certain new claims were thrown on the Mercantile Marine Fund in connection with shipping and the relief of distressed seamen, and it was calculated the extra charge on the fund would be about £40,000 a year. This being so, it was arranged that a Parliamentary grant in aid of £40,000 should be given for five years to meet the new charges thrown on the Mercantile Marine Fund, and if the £40,000 was not sufficient for that purpose the old Mercantile Marine Fund was to make up the deficiency. It must be remembered in regard to this fund that although the £40,000 was based on the fact that certain extra duties, which entailed extra expense to the amount of £40,000, would be thrown on the fund, this particular sum of £40,000 was in no way ear-marked. The voted and non-voted money was put into one purse. If the £40,000 was not sufficient to meet the new charges, then the old Mercantile Marine Fund had to make up the deficiency, and if it was more than sufficient then the Mercantile Marine Fund would get the advantage; but the moneys that were voted and those that were non-voted were all thrown into one purse and were under one management; they were not under the control of the Auditor General and not brought before the Public Accounts Committee. Therefore it depends on the general administration of the Mercantile Marine Fund whether the House should go on voting this £40,000. There are many good reasons why at any rate this year we should carefully review the position. In the first place the five years, the term for which the grant in aid was arranged to be paid, expired in March, 1888, and yet we have twice had the same sum put on the Estimates. Not only have the grants been exhausted, but it looks as if the fund altogether will become exhausted, because not only were the grants of £40,000 not sufficient by £13,000 to meet the new charges thrown on the Mercantile Marine Fund,

but that fund itself has run largely into debt in the last three years, to the extent of nearly £150,000. Therefore I think that before we agree to continue these grants we ought to have a clear idea of the way in which this Mercantile Marine Fund is administered, especially having regard to the important duties of the Commissioners in connection with the management of lighthouses all round our coasts. The administration of the fund I will venture to say shows almost every possible defect. It is in the hands of four large Boards, amongst whom responsibility is entirely frittered away. At the head of them is the Board of Trade, itself a very respectable Department, no doubt, but it has very little of this money to spend, and very little control over the other three Boards, who spend nearly the whole of it. The other Boards are Trinity House, with 31 Members, the Irish Commissioners, and the Commissioners of Northern Lights, each with 22 Members, and these three Boards are in no sense responsible to this House, and they conduct their expenditure in a manner that sends a shiver through the Auditor General and his precise staff of assistants. The two latter Boards more especially have not the most rudimentary responsibility, and freely indulge in dinners and yachting excursions at the public expense. I have had some difficulty in finding out who the Members of the Boards are, but this we do know, that the charges for superannuation for these three Boards is £15,000, although the annual salaries of the Boards are only £27,000. The Scotch Board consists of the Lord Advocate, the Solicitor General for Scotland, 5 Provosts, and 16 Sheriffs. Now I would ask the House to consider what amount of technical knowledge in relation to the important duties under the control of the Board can be possessed by these Gentlemen. The Irish Board consists of merchants and members of the corporation of Dublin, and it is only by accident that a single seaman is on the Board with anything like knowledge of lighthouses. There is another point about these Boards which increases their irresponsibility, and that is, that they receive no pay. I am one of those who think that if there are responsible duties to be performed, they should be paid for; if they are onerous they should be paid for in proportion. There can be no doubt that if payment is not made directly it is received indirectly in the shape of patronage for a large staff, and various pickings and perquisites of which the Boards know well how to avail themselves. The members of the Trinity House Board pay £7,000 a year in salaries. The Scotch Board can only get perquisites, and is quite willing to render accounts. The Irish Board likewise has its perquisites, but it does not care to render accounts. The Trinity House Board consists of 31 members, and 20 of these are considered practical men who do the work, but then these 20 make too large a Board, and, what is most objectionable, they are self-elected. Ten members of the Board are simply ornamental—Princes, Cabinet Ministers, and other persons. Now I strongly object to ornamental Members upon any Board of the kind; I object to it in connection with the Patriotic Fund, with the Queen Anne's Bounty Fund, or anything else of the kind. The Treasury it has admitted has no control whatever, absolutely no guarantee against wasteful expenditure. The Controller and Auditor General has shown how in many instances the Board have acted without any authority whatever, and that was clearly shown in the evidence of Mr. Stoneham before the Public Accounts Committee. The Board of Trade has no control over the accounts.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): Not the general account.

MR. HANBURY: But it is in the general account and in the establishment charges that extravagances occur. For instance, had there been any control, the Commissioners would never have obtained permission to buy land in Ayrshire at £685 an acre. The Auditor General in his evidence complained of the unsatisfactory manner in which the accounts were made up. Up to last year items were given in gross, and the Treasury backed up the Commissioners in refusing to give information. Four years ago the accounts were subjected to audit, and then strange revelations were made. In 1884 the funds in hand amounted to £429,000. When the Auditor General reported in 1886, the securities had decreased by £300,000, and the cash by nearly £20,000; in March of the following year, 1887, the Mercantile Marine Fund had already

borrowed £150,000 from Greenwich Hospital, and the balance was reduced by £7,000, making a total loss of £157,000. By March 1888, £50,000 more had been borrowed and spent, leaving only £50,000 more to be borrowed on the Light Dues, and the cash balance had sank from £100,000 to £60,000. Nor do I feel sure that this can really be called the amount of assets, because there is a large amount of the money which consists of unclaimed wages belonging to deceased seamen, and this, I think, can scarcely be called assets. Nor do I understand why this is not advertized in the papers read by the working classes instead of in the official *Gazette*. While £200,000 had been borrowed and spent, and accounts were not rendered, lighthouses were neglected and necessary expenditure upon them not incurred because funds were lacking for the purpose. This appears from Mr. Stoneham's evidence. The Controller and Auditor General complains of the form in which accounts were presented last year, and he says that it does not bring receipts and expenditure under the notice of Parliament in a clear and satisfactory manner; totals are given without clear explanation of how they are made up. Although the Trinity Board and the Commissioners of Irish Lights do not furnish us with any details of this strange expenditure, I find that the Commissioners of Northern Lights—the Scotch Board—are a little more frank in the matter, and the light they throw on the way the money is spent is not encouraging to the other Commissioners. I find this account rendered—they gave a dinner at the Waterloo Hotel, Edinburgh, in January, 1886. There were 47 people sat down to dinner, and the cost was £179, or nearly £4 a head. The dinner itself cost 30s. a head, but there was not a single bottle of wine drunk which cost less than 21s. 6d. a bottle, and, as more than two bottles a head were consumed, the cost of this item was more than £2 each person. In addition, 124 glasses of brandy were drunk. Next year the dinner bill was reduced to £1.2. In that year we have something to show us that if a strong hand were kept on these Commissioners and they were forced to render accounts a great saving might be effected in these personal expenses. Take the Trinity House. Attention having been called to this extravagance, in 1877 a diminution was made from £4,900 to £2,614 in one head of expenditure, and in another from £2,327 to £800. And in the case of this £800 they declared that if they were left alone they would still further reduce the expenditure, and the Treasury, I believe, came to terms with them on that condition. The management of these three Boards still costs £66,000 a year, or a great deal more than 20 per cent on the total expenditure. There is a deficit altogether of £155,000 a year; but of this, £72,000 is attributable to the remission of certain dues by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), when he was in office; and £12,000 is attributable to the £40,000 granted by Parliament for certain extra charges being deficient by that amount. There still remains a deficit of £70,000. Whatever the explanation may be, the facts which Parliament has to deal with at the present moment are, that there has been a loss of nearly £160,000 a year for nearly 4 years; that £200,000 has been borrowed; that there remain only borrowing powers to the extent of £50,000; and that, as I have shown, the work on the lighthouses is largely in arrear. That being the case, it is clear that the lighthouses cannot continue to be administered by these Boards as at present constituted. We must have some new arrangement in the future, to ensure not only that the necessary work is done and nothing is left undone, but that the whole system of this Mercantile Marine Fund shall be simplified and improved. Now, although these Commissioners and the Mercantile Marine Fund are bankrupt for all public purposes—and I should like to have information from the Board of Trade in regard to this—they are rich in private funds derived from public money. In 1820 the interest on the stock they had invested in the public funds was nearly £7,000 a year, and I gather that they had £230,000 invested. Their receipts from estates amounted in the year to £2,316, and they had a total income of £65,568, only £38,000 of which was spent on lighting and repairs. I cannot find what was done as to this money during the next 12 years, but we get some in-

formation by a side-wind in regard to the enormous profits made out the lights in the hands of private individuals. The right to levy Light Dues had been given to Court favourites and others as a source of income. In 1832 these private persons collected £79,690, and spent on the lights only £19,000; and a proof of the enormous funds at the disposal of the Trinity Board is to be found in the fact that in the year 1842 they bought up all the private lights for £1,250,000, and paid off the whole amount out of their surplus Light Dues in 12 years at the rate of £100,000 a year. In 1853 these Light Dues were paid into the Mercantile Marine Fund. The Trinity Board seemed to be aware of the fate coming on them. They thought they should set their house in order, and during the four years previous to 1853, through putting by a surplus of £100,000 a year to pay for private lights, they were able to reduce the Light Dues to the extent of £118,000, showing what an enormous surplus they must have had in preceding years. In 1853, Mr. Cardwell, then President of the Board of Trade, was able still further to reduce the Light Dues by the sum of £100,000 a year. The question is how far the accumulations, which it is evident they possess, should be drawn on to meet the deficiencies of bad years. I think a good case can be made out for asking, what are the funds of the Trinity House at the present moment? In 1824 a Committee, of which Mr. Hume was chairman, went carefully into the question. They denied the right of the Crown to grant any of these dues, and declared that the whole of the money should be appropriated to the maintenance of the lights, and that the Trinity Board had not even the right to devote any of it to charitable purposes. The Trinity House, however, went on devoting £30,000 or £40,000 a year to charities, and so gross did the scandal become, that another Committee sat and condemned the practice. Coming to the question of how these funds should be administered in future, there are two ways of meeting the existing difficulty. One is by increasing the receipts, and the other is by reducing the expenditure. I do not think it would be a good principle to try and increase the receipts, and even if it were good it would be insufficient. They were increased last year by 16 per cent, which only brought in £62,000, and in that increase, according to the best authorities, they have reached almost the full limit of their tether. Instead of increasing the receipts, what ought to be done is to decrease the expenditure, and bring about better administration. We ought also to decide whether this is to be in future a tax on our shipping, or a tax leviable on the whole of the people of the country. I am inclined to think that the latter principle is the correct one. I do not think the tax should be levied on the whole of our trade——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member has taken a very wide latitude. It is going altogether outside the limits of the discussion to argue whether or not the dues shall be levied on the commerce of the country.

MR. HANBURY: Very well, Sir; all I will say is that the present system of levying the dues partly by taxes on the shipowning interest and partly by grant in aid is a system which should be brought to an end. I think the grant in aid should be largely increased, and that the whole of the funds should be paid to one body, the members of which should be fewer than at present. There should be no ornamental members, and the body should be a responsible one. Perquisites ought to cease, and we ought to have a statement of accounts in future showing how the money is expended. The Controller and Auditor General ought to make a more exhaustive audit of these accounts than he is able to do now. The matter is an important one, involving as it does the safety of our Royal and Mercantile Marine and the lives of our sailors; and I trust it will have the serious attention of the Government. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £5,000.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): As representing a mercantile constituency, I beg to support my hon. Friend in his observations upon this somewhat remarkable Department, which appears to me to unite the eccentricities of the Metropolitan Board of Works with the peculiar finance of the Pension List. In 1882, as my hon. Friend has said, this Department came under the observation of the Controller and Auditor General, and for reasons best known to

himself it was four years before he took notice of the accounts brought under his supervision. When he did notice them his Report was of a startling character. He pointed out that the Department had gone to the bad to the extent of £300,000, and that an enormous sum was being spent on uniforms, travelling expenses, and dinners. At one of the dinners to which my hon. Friend has referred, while £100 was spent on wine, only 6s. was spent on mineral waters. If the taxpayers are to pay £40,000 a year, this Department ought to be put under strict control; and if there are to be no more pensions, no more dinners, no more uniforms, it is possible the country may get more value for its money.

[*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The hon. Members who have spoken on this subject have somewhat wandered from the precise object of the Vote before the Committee. The Vote is for £40,000 in aid of some expenditure thrown by Parliament many years ago on the Mercantile Marine Fund. Not one penny of the money is given to the Trinity House, the Commissioners of Northern Lights, or the Commissioners of Irish Lights. The purposes for which this £40,000 is voted by the House are for the survey staff employed in surveying ships, for the expense of casualty returns, and for the relief of distressed seamen, and all the expenditure is under the Board of Trade. My hon. Friend went into the general questions of the Mercantile Marine Fund, the Light Dues, and the circumstances antecedent to the Act of 1854, by which the Mercantile Marine Fund was placed under the Board of Trade. With respect to the Trinity House, that is a very ancient Corporation, something like 600 years old, and acting under different charters. The whole matter was investigated by various Select Committees before the passing of the Mercantile Marine Act of 1854. What the private property of the Trinity House has to do with the Vote before the Committee I cannot imagine. That property was obtained from Light Dues, and from other sources under ancient charters and patents. These charters and patents were examined into by Parliament, and it was found that the property of the Trinity House belonged to them just as much as property belongs to any other Corporation. I, as President of the Board of Trade, have no knowledge of the property; I have no control over it in any way, and no authority to make any inquiry into it. If my hon. Friends wish to attack the property of the Trinity House they ought to do so by definite motion in the House, and not by speeches on this Vote, with which it has nothing to do whatever. My hon. Friend has spoken of the Mercantile Marine Fund and stated that the financial control of the Board of Trade is of no use. But in the course of his speech my hon. Friend showed what the Board of Trade has done to reduce the expenditure of the three Lighthouse Boards and what I did last year in order to clear the Mercantile Marine Fund from that bankrupt state in which it was a year ago. My hon. Friend charges the three Boards with extravagance in entertainments and matters of that kind; but he admits that much has been done to diminish that expenditure, and I think he ought to have read the paragraph in the Report of the Controller and Auditor General, in which he deals with the subject of diminished expenditure, and states that the charge on the Mercantile Marine Fund for the maintenance of the Trinity House appears to be satisfactory. I do not think it is fair after that conclusion of the Auditor General to charge the Trinity House with extravagance in this matter.

MR. HANBURY: No accounts have been rendered.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Because a fixed sum of £800 a year is now allotted to the Trinity House for this purpose, a large reduction as compared with former years. Well, then, my hon. Friend goes on to object to the constitution of these three Boards. No doubt their constitution is somewhat old-fashioned, but I believe I speak the opinions of those who have preceded me in office, and who have had more experience of the matter than I have had, when I say that the administration of those Boards, however they may be constituted, is satisfactory and valuable to the public service. If the lights were placed under the Board of Trade or some other Department of the Government, I do not believe they would be as efficiently nor as cheaply administered as they are now. But if my hon. Friend desires to

make so radical a change as that, I do contend that it ought to be the subject of a Motion in this House, rather than mere criticism upon the Vote of £40,000 in aid of the Mercantile Marine Fund. The Controller and Auditor General, in the 10th paragraph of his last Report, says, "I think it desirable to call attention to the form in which this account is presented"—that means the whole of the accounts.

"It does not, in my judgment, bring all the receipts and expenditure of the Mercantile Marine Fund under the notice of Parliament in as clear and as satisfactory a manner as it might."

Well, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer and myself paid some attention to this matter last autumn, and we appointed a strong Departmental Committee, composed of Sir Reginald Welby, Mr. Godley, of the India Office, and Mr. Calcraft, of the Board of Trade, with the following reference:—

"To inquire and report upon—First, the present condition of the Mercantile Marine Fund; second, the system by which votes in aid are granted to that Fund, and into the administration and expenditure of the Fund; and third, whether, on the part of the Departments spending money out of that Fund, due economy is exercised, and whether any, and if so what, alteration seems advisable in any part of the work of the administration of the Fund."

The Committee will see that the terms of the reference will secure complete investigation of the accounts of the Fund and its administration. Although the gentlemen I have named are full of work, they have devoted much time to this subject, but have not yet completed their Report. I have no doubt whatever, from what I have already heard, that as one result of their investigations there will be placed before Parliament a much better statement of the accounts of the Fund than has hitherto been presented. As to the condition of the Mercantile Marine Fund, my hon. Friend spoke of it as it existed last year, as in a bankrupt condition. No doubt it is true that the Fund borrowed £200,000, and was expending at the rate of £90,000 or £100,000 more than it received; but by the increase of Light Dues which came into effect a year ago there has been such a change that in the year ending 31st March, 1889, the Fund will balance itself within £5,000. And I have no doubt in my own mind that by the same time next year there will be a surplus, with part of which the Lighthouse Authorities may be able to undertake some of those works which I am quite ready to admit with my hon. Friend have been deferred longer than advisable. Some of them are already ordered; others will be undertaken as opportunity permits. I think my hon. Friend has rather exaggerated the necessity of these works. The existing service has been completely maintained, and I can assure my hon. Friend he is mistaken in supposing that it is not being well and efficiently administered. I admit that some fresh lights and some improvements may be required, and I have no doubt that without extravagance and with due regard to economy we shall be able to make those improvements by the improved state of the Fund.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I want to ask whether something cannot be done to make these Light Dues fall fairly on the various ports in the three Kingdoms? Glasgow is very heavily handicapped.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have, in former years, laid down that the administration of the lights could not be entered into in connection with this Vote. This is a special subsidy of £40,000 under Act of Parliament given to the Mercantile Marine Fund, and afterwards such a sum of money as may be necessary to equal the receipts and charges of the Fund. Therefore, the subject matter of this Vote relates to the receipts and charges of the Fund to which this £40,000 is given.

MR. CRAIG (Newcastle): Sir, the question was raised in 1887 by myself, and I find in *Hansard* that you said the discussion was "quite relevant to the subject matter of the Vote before the Committee." Last year you allowed the discussion on this same Vote, which is the only Vote which comes before the House.

THE CHAIRMAN: If I gave that decision—I am not aware of it—I was in error in so doing.

DR. CLARK: I wanted to point out that by the charges imposed Glasgow is very heavily handicapped, and the Scotch trade very much depressed, the dues charged upon Glasgow being twice and three times as heavy as the dues of London, but it seems that I would

be out of order in so doing. I take it that the whole discussion has been out of order from the very beginning.

MR. L. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland): I think we are very much indebted to the hon. Member for bringing this question up, but the speech of the President of the Board of Trade was not altogether satisfactory. The point I wish to become acquainted with is the management of this Fund.

THE CHAIRMAN: I told the hon. Member for Caithness that he was out of order.

MR. S. STOREY (Sunderland): I rise for the purpose of expressing the pleasure with which I heard the statement of the President of the Board of Trade, and the fact that the Departmental Committee which has been appointed may be instrumental in bringing the accounts of the Fund under the purview of this House. I want to direct the attention of the Committee to a point which has not been raised, and on which I, for one, would be glad to obtain considerably more information. In the Civil Service Appropriation Account for 1887-88, p. 188, there is Account C, giving details of the dues received, salaries and other expenses of administration in various ports of the Kingdom under the Merchant Shipping Act. In this account I find the net fees received from various sources, which appear as a credit of the Estimate for the £40,000, which Parliament grants to the Board of Trade. At the bottom of this account I find the net fees received by the Registrar of Seamen for inspection of the registers, stated at £348 8s. 7d. If the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hanbury) wants the House to get at any real information on these matters, he should urge upon the Committee to take care that in any future account the two sides shall be fully set out; because it is telling us very little to say that the net fees received for the registration of seamen were £348 8s. 7d. What I am concerned to find out is, how much did it cost to produce that sum? A similar remark applies to the next item, which is for net fees received by the Registrar General of Seamen for copies of documents and certificates. I say nothing of the incredible meanness of the arrangement under which fees are exacted at all in such matters, but I do say that if they are exacted from the poor seamen, we ought to have an account showing how the money is expended. Then we have £1,862 8s. 3d. as the net amount received by the Receiver of Wrecks, and I am curious to know what was the gross sum received, and what was expended under that head. Still more curious am I to discover what was the gross amount under the next head, where we are told that the net fees received for the engagement and discharge of crews was £2,084 9s. 10d. Then there is an item of £1,965 net as fees received for the examination of engineers, and here again, I should like to know what was the gross amount. In fact, instead of merely having this account telling us that there have been net receipts of £5,500, I hope the right hon. Gentleman will take care that in the next account put before us, the two sides are set out, so that on the one side we may have the gross receipts, and on the other the expenditure to the officials in fees or other emoluments. I draw attention to these items because they make a total which goes to the credit of Parliament and diminishes our grant in aid by some £5,000 or £6,000. As far as I can judge, this represents about half the sum which the Trinity House and the various Boards waste deliberately every year. It seems to me incredibly mean—for there is not another adjective in the English language that will express it—that under this fund it should be possible for gentlemen to spend thousands of pounds unnecessarily in eating and drinking and amusing themselves, and that at the same time, in order to balance their accounts, they should exact these fees and other allowances from poor seamen and others, under exceptionally painful and difficult circumstances. I think it would be more to their credit to cease this extra expenditure, so as to render it unnecessary to exact these petty fees. At any rate, if the fees are to be exacted, I hope the right hon. Gentleman will take care that Parliament shall see the whole of the accounts. I have not bestowed the industry on this matter that has been expended by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hanbury), but connected as I am with a shipping port, I feel great interest in it, and I think that if the whole of these things could only be

brought under the attention of Parliament and examined, year by year, with a critical eye to all their details, a very different and much more satisfactory state of things would be produced.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: If the hon. Gentleman will turn to the Estimates he will see that they state the actual receipts from survey fees, engineer's examination fees, unpaid wages, salvage, and so on, in the years 1885, 1886, 1887 and 1888. If any alteration can be made in the account, of the nature to which the hon. Gentleman has referred, in order to make it more clear, I will have it done. The hon. Gentleman is quite mistaken in supposing that these fees are levied by the Trinity House; they are levied by the Board of Trade under the Act of Parliament, and have no relation to the expenditure by the Trinity House to which he has referred. I am sorry that my hon. Friend (Mr. Hanbury) so much overstated the expenditure. It is not fair to blame the Trinity House for expenditure in going about in vessels engaged in their service. The Trinity House authorities are obliged to visit the various light-houses, light ships and beacons from time to time, to see whether they are in proper order and also to arrange for supplying them periodically with the necessary requisites for maintaining the service; and my hon. Friend has mixed up the necessary expenditure for this purpose with what he terms their personal expenditure on themselves.

MR. STOREY: May I ask is it not the fact that the grant in aid depends in part on the rate of these fees? If these rates are greater or less, that would affect the decision as to the amount of the grant in aid. If the grant in aid were less, Trinity House would have less money to guzzle with. Trinity House is not able to balance the account without the grant.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: That has nothing to do with it.

MR. STOREY: I wish to put my point. I am talking of Trinity House as a whole. Their business is to administer public works, and they have to provide the funds for this.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: That is not the point.

MR. STOREY: I do not suppose I am putting the point as the right hon. Gentleman would wish; but I desire to put it in my own way. Trinity House is provided by Parliament with £40,000 on account of certain duties it has to perform, and this sum may be increased if the Treasury thinks fit. If the grant in aid were less than it is, it seems to me that Trinity House would have less money to spend in the way referred to. Of course I cannot convince the right hon. Gentleman, and I will not try to do so any further; but I should say that if I had money to administer and did not spend it in one direction, I should have more to expend in another.

COLONEL HILL (Bristol, South): It seems to me that the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Storey) is under a misapprehension in thinking that the £40,000 has to do with Trinity House. The Mercantile Marine Fund is applicable to many purposes which Trinity House has nothing to do with. I think it would be a great pity if it should go forth that the lighthouses in this country are in a bad condition, owing to want of funds. I venture to assert that there is no country in the world whose light-houses and light-ships and beacons are better managed and attended to than those of Great Britain.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is scarcely in order in the remarks he is now making.

COLONEL HILL: I must apologise for being out of order, but I thought it might be supposed that we left our sailors in danger by not having efficient lights.

MR. CRAIG: May I point out that by Clause 5 of the Act the annual sum of £40,000 expired in the year 1888, and after that there was no obligation on the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to pay the amount, although they were empowered with the concurrence of the Board of Trade having regard to the receipts and expenditure of the Mercantile Marine Fund under Sections 3 and 4 of the Act to continue the contribution or make it less. Now I wish to know whether, if this account has not been adjusted we are at liberty to discuss it? Why do not you adjust it right out? Is there a deficit? If so, why? These are questions of some importance, and we require light to be thrown on them by those who are the only persons responsible. Nearly seven months ago I complained of the scanty information given in this

Estimate, and I am glad the President of the Board of Trade has given us an assurance that we shall have fuller details in the future. If, however, these details are not certified by the Board of Trade——

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: They are.

MR. CRAIG: If you have no control over the details, on what ground do you ask us for a grant in aid? Further, why do not you ask for sufficient to prevent there being a deficit? I really think these questions ought to be answered.

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: One of the objects of the reference to the Committee which I read to the House was to inquire into the amount of the grant in aid, and the Committee will say what sum they would recommend should be voted in the future. It was at first supposed that £40,000 would prove sufficient, but it did not; and I hope that as a result of the inquiry by the Committee we shall be able to make a proposal to Parliament which will place the contributions to the Mercantile Marine Fund on a fairer basis than at present.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): Am I to understand that before the Estimates come before us the question will be considered by the Committee?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes, Sir.

Vote agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £23,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for Her Majesty's Foreign and other Secret Services."

Whereupon Motion, made and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again," —(*Mr. Jackson,*)—put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow, at Two of the clock; Committee also report Progress, to sit again to-morrow, at Two of the clock.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURAL BILL.

(No. 221.)

SECOND READING.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): In rising to move the Second Reading of this Bill, I must refer for a few moments to the history of the case so far as a Department of Agriculture is concerned. There has been a very strong expression both in and out of Parliament of a desire for a Department primarily responsible for the interests of agriculture, and from time to time during the last ten or 12 years there has been an expression of feeling on the part of those representing the agricultural interest in this House which successive Governments have found it impossible and, indeed, have not desired to resist. This feeling has been increased and deepened by the depression which has undoubtedly existed during the last few years in agricultural industry. It has been admitted on both sides of the House that the depression has caused an amount of suffering not confined to the propertied classes but extending also to those who live by their labour. This is a matter which no Government can overlook. I do not mean to state that past Governments have been indifferent to the interests of the agricultural classes of this country. Much has been done with the view to meet the demands which have been made from time to time. In 1883 the Committee of Agriculture of the Privy Council was constituted, and I think it will be admitted by all who have paid a due regard to the work that has been done that the Committee of the Privy Council has carefully endeavoured to safeguard the interests of agriculture. The Government of 1887 and 1888 admitted that it was necessary to reconstitute the Department which had the care of agriculture, and I cannot but regard that obligation as one which is pressing upoh the House and upon the present Government. Having regard to the present condition of affairs, the competition which exists in agricultural districts, the reduction of prices during the last few years, resulting, perhaps, in a greater dislocation of employment in the agricultural industry than in any other industry, and having regard also to the fact that in many parts of the country land has been allowed to go out of cultivation and that those who had been dependent upon it as owners and cultivators and employers have suffered most severely, we cannot but admit that there exists very considerable ground for the demand made on behalf of the agricultural classes for

the constitution of a Department which shall make the interests of agriculture its special and peculiar charge. We admit, Sir, that this is not a personal, individual, or sectional question. It is not confined to the interests of the landowner or the farmer or even the agricultural labourer, but is an Imperial question. It is clearly to the interests of the country that the land should be made productive to its utmost capacity, and should be made to contribute to the prosperity of the country as far as possible. This Bill provides for the constitution of a Board of Agriculture on the principle of the Local Government Board and the Board of Trade and as a part of the Government of the country. The Board will consist of a President, who will be the Minister in special charge of the Department, and he will be assisted by members of the Cabinet and by such other persons, if any, as Her Majesty may from time to time deem fit to appoint. I am aware that some hon. Members are of opinion that a Board is not a proper constitution for a Ministry of this character. But I venture to think it is desirable that there should be Members of the Board who, for consultative purposes, might be called in to assist the Minister; and there are occasions when the ordinary Members of the Board might prove exceedingly useful to the Minister. That is a matter, no doubt, of opinion; but I believe it has been found in the past that the Members of the Committee of the Privy Council on Agriculture who are not Members of the Government have given most useful assistance to the Lord President, who is practically at present the Minister in charge of the Department. The Bill provides that the salary to be appropriated to the President of the Board of Agriculture shall be the same as that of the President of the Board of Trade and the President of the Local Government Board. It also provides that in the event of any one of the great officers of State who are named in the Bill being appointed to the position of President of the Board, he shall not receive the salary named in the Bill. It is therefore distinctly contemplated that some one of these officers may be charged with the duties of President. The Bill proposes to take over the existing officers of the Privy Council Committee and of the Land Commission. I desire to refer to the excellent services which have been rendered by the Members of the Land Commission and by its officers. I believe there is no Department of the public service which has done better work in every respect than the Members and officers of the Land Commission. The Government are of opinion that the staff of the Commission may be very usefully taken over by the Ministry of Agriculture, and that their experience and knowledge will prove exceedingly useful to the Minister for Agriculture, while by the transfer a considerable economy will be effected. It is further provided in the Bill that it shall be in the power of Her Majesty in Council to transfer to the Board such powers and duties of any Government Department as are conferred by statute, provided always that the Orders in Council shall be laid before Parliament for a period of 30 days during the sitting of the House, so as to give an opportunity to either House of Parliament to express its opinion upon the transfer. Our object in making that provision is that when the Board has been established and has got to work and has proved its capacity for the discharge of the duties intrusted to it—the care of a population exceeding that engaged in any other industry—it may fitly have transferred to it duties which bear upon the interests of agriculture, so that it may from time to time accumulate to itself, with the sanction of Parliament, the responsibilities which properly belong to a great Department. The Bill is an effort to establish a Department which will, I hope, be exceedingly useful to the agricultural community. No doubt a great strain has been put upon those who are interested in land during the last few years. Prices have fallen; there has been an absence of profit in almost every important portion of the farmer's industry, and now we have to endeavour by all the means in our power to bring back prosperity to that portion of Her Majesty's subjects, not by any action of Parliament, not by the fostering care of a Department, but by bringing home to them that knowledge and power by which they themselves may work out their own deliverance.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second Time."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): There will be no difference of opinion as to the necessity of a Minister being set apart for the purpose of superintending the interests of agriculture. That is a position which the House accepted unanimously in 1881, when my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian was Prime Minister. That principle has been carried out in a manner to which I will allude directly. If the time has arrived when dissatisfaction is felt with the mode which has been in force for sometime, and it is thought desirable to alter the mode, the principle remains intact, namely, that the House approves of a Minister to preside over this most important branch of our national industry and manufacture. I do not know whether the First Lord of the Treasury did not hold out rather too rosy a prospect as to the result which may follow from the appointment of this Minister. I am not disposed to undervalue the great power and beneficial effect of Ministers, but I am afraid the evils under which our agricultural friends suffer are not evils which Government or laws can cure. Any prospect which would hold out to the agricultural community that either prices will be affected or that the present conditions will be altered by anything this House can do in the way of altering the present machinery for conducting agricultural affairs, is very likely to prove an illusory one. The First Lord of the Treasury omitted to inform the House that there is at present a responsible Minister of Agriculture distinct from the Lord President of the Council. There was in 1883 constituted a separate Committee of the Privy Council for Agriculture, presided over by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. I do not say that this is the best plan, but at the present moment we have a responsible Minister of Agriculture, the Duke of Rutland. The Government have come to the conclusion that it is desirable to terminate this state of things, but the right hon. Gentleman has not told the House what functions he proposes to confer on the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in lieu of those he at present discharges, or whether that office is now to be relegated to the position of a sinecure. I think the First Lord of the Treasury will agree that it is most desirable that the House should watch with the most jealous care any proposal to add to the paid Ministers of the Crown having seats in either House of Parliament. Our forefathers were very careful on this point, and unless the case is absolutely proved as a clear necessity which could not be met in any other way, we ought not to add to the number of Members of the House holding offices under the Crown. I do not know whether hon. Members are aware that in this and the other House of Parliament there are about 50 Members holding office and receiving public remuneration. Including those Members who are not in the Cabinet, and those who are attached to the Household, there are 31 Members of this House who receive pay. They are a body of great ability and force, but they should not be added to save in a clear case of public necessity. I admit that the Minister of Agriculture should be a Member of either House of Parliament, but the point I desire to lay stress upon is this—is there no mode of reconstructing and redistributing the present offices of the Government so that a due supervision can be obtained of agriculture without adding to the present paid body? There are seven Members of this House representing the Treasury. I do not think that a case now exists for three Lords of the Treasury in the House of Commons. For a long succession of years one of the Lords of the Treasury attended to Scottish business; but recently a Secretary for Scotland has been created. Therefore you have a surplus Lord of the Treasury. Then there is the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster, which happens to be held by a Member of the House of Lords. There are four Members of the Household have seats in this House—the Treasurer, the Controller, the Chamberlain, and the Groom. I do not know that there is any public necessity why all those Gentlemen should have seats in Parliament. Then there are the various offices of the Secretaries of State. I do not say that the Home, Colonial, and India Offices are over-represented. The War Office has been subjected under the present Minister for War to a great improvement. When he took office there were four representatives of the War Office in this House, but now there

are only two. There is room for reduction in the Admiralty. [Admiral FIELD: "No."] My hon. Friend is a great authority on Naval matters, and I should be sorry to express an opinion against him in the Naval Department of the Admiralty, but looking at the matter from the Parliamentary point of view, I think the present First Lord and the present Secretary are quite capable of representing the interests of the Admiralty in this House, and the office of the Civil Lord is a surplusage. Admitting, therefore, the necessity for a change in the present mode of administration, I think the Government might so re-arrange the present Members of the Government having seats in the House, as to provide a Minister of Agriculture without adding to the Members of the Government with seats in Parliament. As to the proposed remuneration, it could very easily be obtained if some of the sinecure offices were suppressed. I wish the First Lord of the Treasury had given us a little more information as to the staff and the establishment. It is not the salary of £2,000 a year which constitutes the danger of cost; it lies in the fourth clause. The danger is that the Board of Agriculture will appoint secretaries and officers and an expensive staff. The view I wish to submit to the Government is that there is not the slightest necessity to add to the present civil expenditure in reference to this Department. What the country and the agricultural Members desire is a responsible Minister in this House who can represent their views. We do not wish to create another highly-paid staff of officials in addition to that at present existing. The Agricultural Department of the Privy Council cost in salaries last year £30,486. If we take education and agriculture away from the control of this Department, what can it have to do except work of a purely ceremonial character? The cost of the Education Department, exclusive of inspection, non-effective services, and all grants amounts to £60,000. The Privy Council itself cost £21,000, and the fees received were under £2,000. There are those who think the better way would have been to have separated the Education Department from the Council altogether, and to have an independent Minister of Education, and I believe the country will never rest until it has an independent Minister of Education. There is already an expenditure for staff and management in the Agricultural Department of the Privy Council which ought to be amply sufficient for this new Department which is to be created. It is proposed to transfer to the Board of Agriculture the work of the Land Commission. I think that is a very great improvement. What does the Land Office cost? Last year it cost something like £23,000 — £22,934. Three Land Commissioners receive £1,500 a year, then there are two Assistant Commissioners and one chief clerk with £800 a year, and one clerk with £550 a year. My point is that these highly paid officials, whose work is to be transferred, ought themselves to be transferred to the new Department. I am glad to find that the First Lord of the Treasury cheers that statement, but I contend that we must give no discretion to anyone to do otherwise. We must make this clear; because there is a clause in the Bill which says that these gentlemen are not to be placed in any worse position as respects their tenure of office, salary, or superannuation, than at present—a provision which is so worded as to be just the very thing to raise controversies with the Treasury which will practically end in these gentlemen being pensioned off, and another large staff put upon the country. We had this in the bankruptcy readjustment. I remember that I tried very hard to get the House to pass a clause making it compulsory on the Lord Chancellor to transfer all the occupants of the old offices to the new; but we had the usual Treasury Bench objections that you must not control a great personage like the Lord Chancellor, and must leave him to exercise his own discretion. Of course the House accepted that view and did not insist on taking away the discretion of the Lord Chancellor—who, equally of course, did not exercise that discretion in the way the House desired, and never will. If, in abolishing one office and substituting another, the House means that the old officers are to do the work of the new Department, it must say so in explicit terms that cannot be explained away; and I, for one, shall most earnestly object to and resist as far as I can in Committee any attempt to create a new Department for secretaries

and officers and servants, and pensioning off the existing staff of secretaries and officers and servants, for I contend that with an expenditure of £30,000 a year on the Privy Council Office, and £22,000 a year on the office of the Land Commission, we are paying a particular class of men quite sufficient, both as to number and remuneration, to discharge the whole of the duties which are proposed by this Bill to be placed on the new Department. These are the only remarks I have to make at present. I have no opposition to urge against the principle of the Bill, although there are many questions that will arise in Committee. I am sure there is a desire on this side of the House to facilitate the progress of the measure into Committee, and it is in no spirit of hostility, but simply with a wish to help the Government in carrying out an administrative reform, that I have endeavoured to point out the various difficulties which present themselves to my mind as matters that will have to be dealt with in the next stage, and which, I hope, will be fairly and frankly considered.

MR. JEFFREYS (Basingstoke): In congratulating the Government on the step they have taken in introducing this measure, I would remind the House of the long period of distress and bad harvests which the farmers of this country have of late years had to undergo. Under these circumstances there is no doubt that the care of agricultural interests ought to be committed to a special Department of the State such as is now proposed, and I can only express a hope that the new Board of Agriculture will be composed of men who will be practical agriculturalists, and not mere officials. I do not feel equal to the discussion of whether there should be an entirely new official created, or whether the new Minister of Agriculture should be taken from the official body in this House; but I hope that, whoever he may be, he will be a practical man, and will have under him men who are also practical agriculturalists. I am glad to see that it is proposed to take over that part of the Land Commissioners' duty which relates to the tithes, which at the present moment is a burning question amongst agriculturalists. I hope the new Board will see its way to the introduction of a Bill for the redemption of tithes, which I regard as the only way in which this vexed question can be settled. It is not clear, however, whether the Board will have under its control the Corn Inspectors, whose duty it is to go to different markets and calculate the prices of the corn—wheat, barley, oats, &c.—sold in this country, so as to fix for the year the averages upon which the tithes are based. The farmers complain that the Inspectors do not properly and efficiently carry out their duties, inasmuch as they only deal with the prices where large quantities are concerned and the highest rates are reached, leaving out of their calculation all the corn sold at the lower prices, whereby, the recorded average being higher than it should be, the tithes are also fixed at too high a rate. At present the Inspectors are under the control of the Board of Trade, and I think it would be well to transfer them to the new Board, who should see that the average prices are fairly recorded, and thereby confer a great benefit on the farming community.

MR. HENEAGE (Grimsby): I have to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the Bill he has introduced in compliance with a demand which has been made by agriculturalists more universally than any they have put forward during the last 20 years; and, I may add that while they have demanded a separate Department primarily responsible for agriculture, they have also demanded, with no uncertain voice, that there should be a Minister who must be responsible for that Department. But, while I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the clauses dealing with agriculture and the transfer of the Land Commissioners to the new Department, I cannot congratulate him on the administrative machinery of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to think the Committee of Agriculture set up by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian has been a great success. For three years, however, I believe it never met, and, according to my own experience, when it was called together the Cabinet Ministers always found they had something else to do, and it was only the other Ministers who came. But even this Committee had an advantage over the Board now proposed, because those Ministers who were upon it were selected

as having given great attention to the question of agriculture; whereas the right hon. Gentleman now proposes to set up a Board of *ex officio* Cabinet Ministers. There are eight Cabinet Ministers, all of them with a great deal to do, and these are the Gentlemen who are to be brought together to give the benefit of their intelligence to an unskilled Departmental Minister. What we want is a Minister who will know what he is about and who will not have to ask advice from the Home Secretary or any other official of the Government. But what will be the result of bringing together these eight Cabinet Ministers and others? They will meet, not as a Sub-committee of the Council, though they are of them, because they would not be a Committee of the Council; not as a body of experts, because they are to be chosen, not in consequence of any knowledge of agriculture, but from the position they hold in the administration; in point of fact the proposed Board will be "neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red-herring," and, consequently, for agricultural purposes, they will be practically useless. But there is another objection. If there has been a demand for a separate Minister of Agriculture there has also been a cry for a separate Minister of Education, and if we constitute a Minister of Agriculture I fear we shall be putting off for a long time to come the appointment of a responsible Minister of Education. My right hon. Friend has said there was a Minister who was primarily responsible in the shape of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. So far so good; but he was only primarily responsible, for when he found he had to deal with large questions the President of the Committee of the Privy Council would have his say in the matter, and the Chancellor of the Duchy had not even the last word. I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that the other day he distinctly said the President of the Committee of Privy Council was the responsible Minister, and not the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Therefore we come back to the state of things we all objected to in 1881, when Sir Massey Lopes brought forward his Motion, and when the Privy Council reigned supreme over both Agriculture and Education. I want to see this altered, and when in Committee I shall move to omit Clause 1, and to insert instead a clause framed on the lines of the Secretary for Scotland Bill, declaring that the Minister should hold office during Her Majesty's pleasure, with a salary of £2,000 a year. Either the board is to be a real Board, or it will be a sham, and I think it is a little too late in the nineteenth century to come to this House and ask it to enact a sham. As to the economical part of the question—the question of ways and means—we are told that there will be some saving through the abolition of the Land Commissioners, but if they are not to be retained, some one else will be required to do their work in their stead. I hope we shall have a Department fully equipped with all the officials necessary to carry it on by means of transfers of officials from other Departments. I think it would be very easy to save money in this way. My right hon. Friend (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has referred to a great number of offices that might be abolished, and I will not deal with those. But this I may observe in connection with the office of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, that it will remain practically a sinecure when you have taken the duties which now appertain to the Department under this Bill. And so also with the President of the Privy Council. He will have nothing to do, unless he deals with the Education Department, which we should all deplore. Therefore, I say that if you want £2,000, you have nothing to do but to put two offices together, and so you save a salary. The salary of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster is not paid out of the Imperial revenues, but you can give the work or the office of Lord President to the Chancellor of the Duchy, as well as the office of President of the Board of Works. So it is possible to provide £6,000 a year, and fully equip your Department of Agriculture, without setting up new offices of profit. These are the only remarks I desire to make now. I am cordially in favour of the Bill, but I wish to make it a popular measure by removing those objections on economical grounds to which I have alluded, and I hope, in an improved shape, we shall pass it this Session.

MR. H. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): I do not wish to follow the right hon. Gentleman into

a discussion which is rather more relevant to a Committee than to a Second Reading, but I wish to express, on the part of my constituents, the great satisfaction we feel at the introduction of this Bill. I am sure that none of us expect that the question of agricultural depression is at all involved in the passage of the measure. I do not think any Bill can deal with the real cause of agricultural depression, which is foreign competition, I certainly do not anticipate any such result. It has always been a matter of great surprise to me that the agricultural interest in this country, which we are all never tired of declaring is the greatest industry of the country, should so long have remained without a Department to represent it, or a Minister responsible in this House. In that respect we are far behind other countries —far behind France and America, both of which are provided with Agricultural Departments and with a means of giving effect to any measure for the interest of the country. They are provided with ample means of obtaining information, and that is a great need in this country. It is difficult for any one interested in an agricultural question to know where to obtain authorized information in this country. For instance, only recently a case was brought to my knowledge in which a gentleman had special interest in getting correct information about the law of markets, and it was in relation to the Weighing Machines Bill. He went to the Board of Trade, and they sent him to the Privy Council. From there he was referred to the Local Government Board, and then he was sent up to the Home Office; and still he was unable to get the information he desired. If the Bill removes only this deficiency it will do much for the interest of agriculture, too long neglected.

MR. BARCLAY (Forfarshire): So far as the Bill proposes to create a Board of Agriculture, I have grave reason to fear that it will prove a miserable failure. We have had unfortunate experience of the administration by Boards. I might refer to the Board of Trade, which, so far as it exercises any influence over the business of the country, consists of the President. I really am unable to see what work this Board will have to do. It is evidently a consultative Board from its composition, and the only question that will come before it for decision it seems to me will be the expediency of passing some Order under the Contagious Diseases Animals Act. If we are to derive any benefit from the Department, it must be headed by a responsible Minister, who will take the initiative and interest himself in collecting information that may benefit farmers, and in circulating this information through the country. Unless this can be done, I have no expectation that the new Board will be any better than the present one. The great difficulty is to appoint a Minister with practical knowledge of the requirements of agriculture, and who will take sufficient interest in the subject. Many advantages might be derived from a Board of Agriculture under such control by procuring information from foreign countries—information as to growing of crops and rearing of cattle, and various other matters. But unless the Board is represented in the House we shall have no opportunity of stirring up the Minister on various questions of interest that arise. The difficulty is to find the Minister. That that can be done when there is the right man at the head of the Department, is exemplified by what is done in the United States, where the Department not only collects all available information, and is ready with information as to the particular crops and kinds of seeds suitable for every part of the country, but even supplies farmers with corn samples wherewith experiments may be made. I do not think there is the slightest hope of anything of the kind for this proposed Board, and without something of the same means of obtaining and distributing information, I do not see that the Department will be of more value to farmers generally than the Committee of the Privy Council that now busies itself about cattle diseases. I hope some step may be taken in the direction suggested by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Heneage) —having a responsible Minister in this House. Should the Bill go into Committee I will support the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman and join in so shaping the measure that it may really be of some advantage to farmers.

MR. BEADEL (Essex, Chelmsford): It is rarely I intrude my opinion on the House, but as this Bill deals with a subject in which I and my constituents are specially interested, I may express my thanks that the Bill has been introduced and received with general support from both sides. The only objections that have been raised are but objections to clauses—matters for Committee, not objections to principle. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton must be fully cognizant from professional knowledge of the difficulties under which agriculture has been carried on. He must know that the possessors of landed estates are, some of them, in a hopeless condition, and that there is an absolute necessity that some investigation should take place as to what their difficulties are, and whether some remedy may not be found for them. I am sure the hon. Member for Forfar cannot be a practical agriculturist, or he would not expect that under the condition of things existing farmers can produce crops at a profit, or landlords receive their rents. For myself, I shall be grateful to the First Lord of the Treasury if by means of this Bill we can arrive at some solution that will give even a modicum of comfort to those who own land and those who occupy it, and who both combined are not in a position to employ and afford the means of support to the labouring classes as they desire to do. If, by bringing intelligence to bear, anything can be done to ameliorate the existing condition of things, the Government by introducing the Bill will have rendered a great service to the country.

VISCOUNT GRIMSTON (Herts, St. Albans): I am pleased—and I share the feeling which is I think general—that the First Lord of the Treasury has thought it right to introduce this Bill. There is one point with respect to which an alteration in the Bill would be welcome, an alteration making the Minister at the head of the Department responsible for everything connected with it. I am sure that is quite the feeling in the country, and I trust the Government will find themselves able to give effect to this desire. The duties that will devolve on this new Department will be of the utmost importance. Only yesterday I was talking to a lady, whose name has long been honourably known in connection with agriculture, Miss Ormerod. This lady has carried out most extensive experiments having for their object the protection of our crops from the ravages of vermin. The Department will have an important duty to discharge in spreading knowledge derived from these experiments as to the means of defending our cereals from those ravages that now only allow a third of them to arrive at maturity. It will also diffuse information as to the valuable experiments of Sir J. B. Lawes, in Hertfordshire, which are too little known, and the knowledge of which ought to be spread throughout the length and breadth of the land by such a Department as is now proposed to be created. Agriculturalists do not expect to be made rich by Act of Parliament, and we do not expect that the great depression that has so long affected agriculture can be removed by a stroke of the legislative pen, but we do feel that with somebody in a responsible position at the head of a Department having the interests of agriculture at heart, we should acquire knowledge we at present are without, but which would prove of the highest value, that we shall have better instruction in our agricultural schools and colleges, and in fact I look upon this Bill as the beginning of a movement from which great benefit must accrue to England's greatest industry.

*SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): I am sorry the Bill begins by trying to perpetuate a sham. A Ministry of Agriculture I thoroughly approve of, but a Board of Agriculture will be a repetition of the sham Committees now existing in reference to several Departments. I have had the honour to be Vice-President of the Committee of Council; but I never once saw this Committee; and I suspect the President of the Board of Trade has seen very little of his Board. A Committee or Board is but a buffer

between a responsible Minister and the public; and if you are establishing a new Ministry, you had far better have a Minister responsible for executing the duties of the office than a number of names to which no meaning at all is attached. To proper and productive expenditure in connection with the Department no one will object. The expenditure may be large, but it must be made useful and productive. The United States have a Commission of Agriculture which is economical and yet costly. It has a head Commissioner corresponding to the proposed President; a secretary, a statistician, an entomologist, a botanist, a chemist, a microscopist, a chief of the Forestry Division, a Superintendent of Gardens and Grounds. All of these have laboratories and the means of conducting experiments, with results that are most advantageous to the agriculture of the United States. For instance, the Commission, having studied the cultivation of sugar and proved the best plants for cultivation in the various parts of the States, have so increased cultivation of sugar in the United States that from a large sugar-importing nation, it will in time become a large sugar-producing nation. There is one part of the Bill—Sub-section 2 of Clause 2—to which I cannot but take exception. It is there proposed not only to supersede the control of the Science and Art Department over technical schools in which agriculture is taught, but Inspectors are to be appointed by the Minister of Agriculture. This, I think, is a mistake and there is no more reason why agricultural schools should be under the Board of Agriculture than commercial schools should be under the authority of the Board of Trade, or schools where navigation is taught under the Admiralty. I do not think this proposal is likely to increase the efficieny of the schools. But on the whole I give the Bill my hearty support, and I shall be glad to give what assistance I can in Committee to remedy its defects.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Whatever may be the differences of opinion as to the ultimate effect of the Bill, at all events there is a unanimous concensus of opinion that the introduction of the Bill is an earnest of the interest the Government take in the position of agriculture, and for which I venture to say the agricultural interest will be grateful. For my own part I rather join with the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fowler) in warning Members for agricultural constituencies, and those interested in agriculture, not to expect too much from the passing of the Bill. No Bill can be a specific against agricultural depression, the causes of which lie too deep to be reached by any measure of this character. Still the intention of the Bill is a right one; it is undoubtedly a step in the right direction, and is likely to put us more on an equality with other agricultural nations from whom, in some respects, we have dropped far behind. The right hon. Gentleman, the First Lord, fell into a slight mistake when he said we have a responsible Minister for agriculture at present in the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. I doubt very much if that is an accurate description of his position. I do not think he can be held to be a responsible Minister, because he is not an independent Minister; it is not in his power to take any step of importance which the interests of agriculture may require without the consent and the signature of the Lord President. If there is a responsible Minister now, it is the Lord President of the Council and not the Chancellor of the Duchy. The Bill appears to me to be so drawn as to meet some of the objections urged against it on the ground that it will make unnecessary additions to the staff required for an Agricultural Department. The greater part of the staff is in existence already, and the Bill will merely have the effect of consolidating a number of existing Departments under one responsible head. I am not sure that there is not something in the objection to the constitution of a Board. Is a Board really necessary? I understand it is to be in the nature of a consultative body, for the purpose of instructing a Minister who may not be sufficiently informed in matters of agriculture himself. And it is to consist of

certain officials specified in the Bill, many of whom must be Cabinet Ministers themselves, and also of other persons whom the Board may think it necessary to include. The first class of men it is obvious need not necessarily, and probably would not, be acquainted with agriculture. In that case I do not see the use of their appointment. If certain differences arose between the Minister and his colleagues in the Government as to the measures which the Minister might think necessary to take, they would be settled, of course, in the Cabinet itself. As to those which come in the other category, it is quite true they might be experts in agriculture, but what is to be their position supposing a difference of opinion arose between them and the responsible Minister, and what would be their resources supposing they differed altogether with the Minister, and he insisted on pursuing one policy while they very strongly advocated another? Then, again, I think there was something worthy of consideration in the observations of the right hon. Gentleman opposite in regard to the clause of the Bill which relates to education. It seems to me, however, that these questions are one and all matters purely for discussion in Committee. I hope the Bill will be read a second time to-night, and I hope Her Majesty's Government between now and the Committee stage will consider the various suggestions that have been made.

MR. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon): As I have had something to do with one or two deputations in reference to the question of an Agricultural Department, I should like to thank the Government for having acceded to our wishes by bringing this Bill before the House. But if I faithfully report to the House what I think is the opinion of many farmers on this question, I shall be obliged to say that up to the present the farmers, generally speaking, do not quite understand why an Agricultural Board should consist of Her Majesty's Secretary of State and those other Gentlemen whose names appear in Clause 1. At the same time, if there is any necessity for the forming of the Board in that way, we will not look a gift-horse in the mouth. I join with hon. Members who have already spoken in not only thanking the Government for having introduced this Bill, but in thanking Gentlemen opposite for having expressed their approval, without of course committing themselves to all the details of the measure. The hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. Barclay) seems to think that this scheme will provide the means of teaching farmers their business, and of showing them how to conduct their business under present circumstances with profit. Now, I have no hope whatever in that direction myself. I do not believe that all the Boards that could be devised could teach English farmers how to make the cultivation of English land profitable under present circumstances. At the same time, other countries have well equipped Boards, and if agriculture is of importance to any country in the world, it is of importance to England. We know how we depend on foreign sources for our supply of food, and I think the Government should do everything they can to remove the difficulties of the English and Irish farmers. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Leeds (Sir L. Playfair) seemed to think that the Bill would do mischief to the teaching of agriculture at South Kensington. Without wishing to throw cold water on the endeavours of South Kensington, I may just mention a little fact that came out before the Commission of which I had the honour of being a member. We were examining some schoolmasters as to what was done in the way of teaching agriculture, and we were told by one gentleman that he got a certain amount per head for those pupils who passed in the agriculture branches. He was asked what practical benefit followed the teaching of agriculture in this way, and whether the farmers became peasant proprietors, market gardeners, or what? He replied, "Well, for the greater part we pick for this agricultural instruction the boys we think are the sharpest, and who will be the easiest to pass, and we must admit that those boys, as a rule, have no connection afterwards with

agriculture." I expect that if we attempt to teach agriculture in a technical way we must have some change in this respect, and I think that if we have a representative head of this Board or Department in the House of Commons who understands agriculture practically, we shall obtain a better state of things in connection with agricultural education than that which I have just described. I am sure the farmers have no wish that the Department should cause any great increase in expenditure. We believe that a practical Department might be created without calling on the taxpayers of England for any great increase in taxation, but we do think it of the greatest importance that we should have a responsible head of the Department in the House of Commons, because we have an idea, which my experience in the House thoroughly corroborates, that very little is done here in the way of legislation on agricultural subjects, and what is done is generally done as the result of a good deal of worrying of Ministers by private Members. If we have a responsible representative of this Department on the Front Bench we shall feel we have someone to go to with our grievances, and we shall hope that agricultural questions will make more progress in this House than they have done in the past. I think, also, it is necessary to have practical men taken into consultation with the authorities on this subject, whoever these authorities may be. I think it is further of great importance that when a Department is formed some practical man should be selected with knowledge of farmers throughout the country to be sent down to meet farmers on their own ground. This is done to a certain extent in connection with the Board of Trade and also with the Local Government Board, and I think it of great importance that farmers should be able to come into contact with the Department here in London, because through the very nature of their business they are unable to meet together and to discuss matters as other business men can. Farmers are not so behindhand in practical knowledge as some hon. Members seem to think. Farmers know as well how to conduct the practical part of their business as any of the industrial classes do theirs. But we are so scattered that we have not the means of getting directly in communication with responsible heads of Departments, as other industries have. I hope the Bill will be allowed to pass without any alteration in its main principles. I trust that whatever is done economy will be considered, and that some attention will be given to the consultation of practical men. Then at any rate I think the farmers of England will have the satisfaction of feeling that at last a Government has come into power which has shown sympathy with the British farmers and which is anxious to do all a Government can do for them.

Mr. C. W. Gray

*Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I do not think this debate should come to an end without one county Member on this side of the House saying a word of welcome to this measure, which in its main principle I am sure commends itself to county Members on this side of the House just as much as on the other. The only point I wish to express a decided opinion upon is as to the consolidation of authorities which is the principle of the Bill. The proposal to hand over ultimately the powers of the Land Commissioners to the new Board was of the greatest importance, but I think that consolidation should be prompter than is proposed. As to the constitution of the Board, that has been so unanimously condemned I suppose that defect will be got rid of. I listened with interest to the remarks which fell from the hon. Member for Forfarshire with regard to seed distribution and information as to seeds in America. He omitted to say, however, that there are now no less than 20 different phases of the activity of the Department of which he spoke; and in this context I would point out to the hon. Member for Leeds that the reports circulated in America—which reports are of a most suggestive and practical character for agriculturalists — number 400,000 or 500,000 a year. We all know that the admirable Reports issued by the Privy Council, such as those by Miss Ormerod as to destructive insects, and those of Professor Brown as to swine fever, are of great value to farmers, but can the re-

ports which have reached our farmers compare in number to the figures I have referred to? On the general principle of the Bill, with the exception of the constitution of the Board, I believe the House is practically agreed.

*SIR W. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): I desire to call attention to the remarks made by my hon. Friend the Member for the Chelmsford division of Essex (Mr. Beadel) as to the present condition of agriculture. Many people do not recognize the extent of the sufferings which the agriculturalists have been going through for a considerable time. But there is one thing which they do recognize—namely, the influx of agricultural labourers into the towns to see if they can find more profitable employment than is to be had in the country. I would remind the House that that nation is the most prosperous which grows a considerable quantity of food for its own people. I thank my right hon. Friend for giving us hope that some consideration will now be paid to the agricultural interest. Not that a Board of Agriculture or a Minister of Agriculture can do everything, but it is right that agriculturalists should have an opportunity of coming to someone who thoroughly understands the business, and of inquiring what quantities of corn are produced abroad, and what quantities are likely to come into this country, whether the Inspectors in the various corn markets have done their duty, and whether a fair average price of corn has been given. They will also want to know that all disease is kept out of the country, and that there will be a clean bill of health before any foreign cattle are allowed to come in. I believe that a Minister who will be solely responsible is infinitely preferable to a Board.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire): As a Member for an agricultural county, I beg to thank the Government for introducing the Bill, but having taken the work in hand, I do hope they will do it thoroughly and will consent to redraft the first Clause. What the House and the agricultural interest desire is that there should be a Minister responsible to the House, and that he should have the aid of men who are thoroughly and practically acquainted with agriculture. I trust, therefore, that the Cabinet Ministers who are named, and who will constitute more or less a phantom Board, will be cleared away. I trust that another result of the measure will be the abolition or reorganization of the Woods and Forests Department. The interesting Report of the Select Committee which sat on the question brought out the fact that England, one of the wealthiest of countries, is behind the nations of the Continent in forestry, and that there are vast tracts of England which can be planted to the great benefit of agriculture, and the beauty of the country, and also to great economic advantage. I think also that if this work of forestry is taken in hand seriously by the Board of Agriculture, they will be able in a few years to establish schools of forestry in England, Scotland, and Wales, and be able to set up examples for private owners and create demesnes of great good to agriculture and of beauty to our hills and mountains which will become in the end of great financial advantage.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I trust I may now ask the House to give the Bill a Second Reading. I have no complaint to make against hon. Gentlemen as to the way in which they have received the measure. It is natural that there should be differences of opinion as to the provisions of the measure, and that some hon. Member should desire to have a Board and others a Minister without a Board. One hon. Gentleman desires that the Board should be responsible to Parliament and should not be a sham. But if it is responsible to Parliament it will not be a sham. The Local Government Board has a responsible Minister and is not a sham.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that he is only speaking with the indulgence of the House, as he has no right of reply.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I only desired very briefly to answer some of the points that have been put by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. One hon. Gentleman desired that the Board should be responsible to Parliament and should not be a sham. But if it were responsible to Parliament it would not be a sham. I hope the Government will be able to obtain the assistance of gentlemen who are well acquainted with all subjects connected with agriculture. It is expressly provided that there should be transferred to the new Department such officers as are employed in any other Department which would be merged in the new Department. No option is to be given to those Gentlemen, except that they should not be transferred to positions inferior to those which they have previously filled. It may be possible to transfer to the new Department an existing Minister, although it is not expressly so provided. But I do not think there will be any additional cost incurred. The Government have shown that they are not insensible to the necessity of reduction in the number of officials. The Surveyor General of the Ordnance, for example, and the Judge Advocate General have ceased to be officials in the receipt of salary. One of the Land Commissioners is also extinct. The right hon. Member for Leeds has referred to the subject of technical education. I am, however, inclined to agree with the hon. Member for Essex that the instruction given in the present schools is of a somewhat perfunctory character, and unless this training is made of a more practical and beneficial character it will become doubtful whether it is worth while to incur the expense which these schools occasion. The broad lines of the measure have been sufficiently indicated, and the Government are prepared to consider the details in Committee. What the Government desire is to constitute a Department the principal duty of which would be to watch over the great industry of agriculture. I am afraid we can not hope to teach farmers their business or to improve prices or production, but we might do good by organization and direction. I hope the House will now read the Bill a second time, as there is another measure to follow.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): As representing a large agricultural district, I wish to thank the Government for having introduced this Bill, which will establish a Department that will be the recipient of valuable agricultural information, with, I hope, a Minister to represent it whose place will be in the House of Commons. I am thankful that Her Majesty's present Government is the first that has stepped out of its way for the last 20 years to help the agricultural community, who, I think, will accept this Bill as a set-off against the superfluous proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which were not received with more enthusiasm than they deserved in the part of the country which I have the honour to represent. I hope I may say without presumption that I trust the right hon. Gentleman will take care to man the new Department with practical men of the stamp of the late Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell), instead of merely ornamental individuals, or what we in Essex call mere platform farmers, who have no sound practical knowledge of agriculture.

SIR E. LECHMERE (Bewdley): I only wish to say that, as a Member of the Forestry Committee, I trust that the very important question with which they are associated will receive attention at the hands of the Government in the Bill now before the House.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second Time, and committed for Monday, 17th June.

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [Lords]. (No. 199.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): In moving the Second Reading of this Bill, I do not propose to take up more than a

few minutes of the time of the House. It is practically the same measure as has been thrice passed through the other House of Parliament. It was introduced by Lord Selborne in 1883, and it was passed on the Motion of Lord Herschell in 1886, and again on the Motion of the present Lord Chancellor in 1887 and 1888. It consists mainly of improvements in the existing law, suggested either by the Select Committee of the House of Commons that investigated the subject, or by the Lunacy Commissioners themselves. It is proposed that those improvements should be included in the Consolidation Bill prepared by the Lord Chancellor. The Government intend that the Bill should be referred to one of the Standing Committees. The main object of the measure is to provide additional securities against the improper confinement and treatment of lunatics. A new feature has been introduced—namely, that there should be an inquiry before a permanent judicial tribunal. In order to obviate the evils of vexatious actions against medical men, and also to provide a security against any possible abuse of the anomalous privilege which medical men have so long enjoyed, it is provided that a judicial inquiry shall be held and a judicial decision obtained before a person can be permanently confined as a lunatic. The Bill also aims at the gradual extinction of private asylums. It so happens that there has been a great fluctuation of opinion on this matter. In the discussions which took place on the subject in 1884 and 1885, the weight of opinion was against the continuance of private asylums; but since then there has been a revulsion of feeling. Of course the keepers of these asylums are necessarily largely interested in their retention, and it is proposed that no new asylum shall be licensed after the passing of the Bill, the largest protection being given to existing rights. There are not fewer than 3,000 patients in private asylums of this sort, and it is quite obvious that it would be impossible to deal with them in any piecemeal manner. I really do not think I need say more. I do not think there are any matters of consequence in this Bill, except those to which I have alluded. There are a great number of minor provisions in the Bill which will be of very great use in dealing with this afflicted class, whose treatment has been so much ameliorated of late years, but with regard to whom some additional measures of precaution and prevention are necessary.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*DR. D. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire): I am really glad that this Bill has passed in another place, because there is need of a Bill of this sort, which I am bound to say contains a great many useful provisions. This Bill was introduced to this House formerly under the charge of Lord Herschell, but there are many points in the present Bill which to my mind do not improve it. The College of Physicians have petitioned against at least four of its main provisions, and representations coming from such a responsible body as that require the earnest consideration of this House. The reasons for the action they have taken are twofold. The Bill protects the doctors, who at the present moment are so much in dread of legal proceedings that they dare hardly venture to certify lunacy at all, and the result of that is that many acute cases, which ought to be brought under immediate treatment, are allowed to drift into hopeless and incurable insanity. And the Bill further puts real responsibility on the Justice or Judge, and protects the medical profession from irritating prosecutions. Another point is the protection of the patients. At present, so much time is occupied in bringing an acute case under medical treatment that very often it reaches the incurable stage or the chronic stage before a chance of proper treatment has been brought about. We have heard a great deal about private lunatic asylums, and it has been suggested that interest

might lead the proprietor of a private asylum to do that which is not right. That is only theoretical. I am bound to say, after very careful consideration of the evidence, and more especially the evidence before the Select Committee which sat some years ago, that however good those arguments may be theoretically, they are entirely overdone. I think a more honourable class of men than those who own private lunatic asylums are not to be found. A great drawback to this Bill is that it introduces a monopoly of private lunatic asylums which probably would become very narrow, and eventually restrictive, and possibly injurious. I think it is far better to allow this branch of the profession to be ventilated by the free air of competition than to subject it to restrictions, however carefully administered. Another point to which the medical profession attach great importance in the treatment of insanity, is that the patients may be treated in small places, where, say, two patients would get far more benefit than in a larger establishment. The Bill places great restrictions upon that sort of treatment, and I think that some alteration might be effected in that direction. The Bill, it is said, practically follows the Scotch procedure. I venture to take entire exception to that. It is a travesty rather than an imitation of the Scotch procedure. One objection is the legal element on the Lunacy Board. I hope when the Bill comes down from Grand Committee I shall have an opportunity of carrying an Amendment, to eliminate as far as possible the legal element from the inspectorship of lunacy. I must say that I have some distrust of the tribunal—the Standing Committee on Law—to which this Bill is to be referred. The lawyers have already too much to do with this Bill, and it seems to me that the chance of getting any alteration in it when it is before the Grand Committee on Law will be very small indeed. Therefore, I hope that when the Bill comes down from upstairs we shall have an opportunity of discussing its provisions on the Third Reading and on Report. With these criticisms, which at this stage I venture to make, I hail this Bill with satisfaction, and I think on the whole it will be a most useful measure and likely to give satisfaction to the medical profession.

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: I am sure we wish to respond to the invitation of the First Lord of the Treasury, and I think he will admit that the course of business during the evening is rather better than he expected. I hope we may make better progress to-morrow, and that it will have a practical result. But I rose to appeal to the House to let the Second Reading go at once, and upon this ground. This Bill was prepared by Lord Selborne, with the concurrence of the then Home Secretary, Sir William Harcourt. It was afterwards approved by Lord Herschell, and my right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh. It has been subsequently approved by Lord Halsbury and the present Home Secretary. Three Lord Chancellors and three Home Secretaries have approved of the principle of this Bill as a great improvement in the Lunacy Laws.

Mr. MOLLOY (Birr, King's County): As to the general character of the Bill, I am bound to say I am in accord with it. I think that our present method of dealing with lunatics is a very great improvement indeed upon the old system. The one point I do not like is the continuation of private lunatic asylums, to which I have always objected. At all events their number will not be increased, which, so far, is very good.

Mr. MATTHEWS: Nor the number of patients.

Mr. MOLLOY: You are putting an enormous value upon these private lunatic asylums, and you are giving them a property which they do not possess at the present time. I think if there was some termination to the existence of these private asylums it would be a very great boon indeed. I

am bound to say, however, that after a long conversation with my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General on this subject my view has been modified with regard to private lunatic asylums; still on the whole I should be glad to see them done away with. When we get into Committee I want to get the system of private lunatic asylums attached to the public system, so as to have each private establishment attached to a public asylum, so that you would have equal care taken of the patients and get rid of the dangers which there are in the system of private lunatic asylums. We shall have ample opportunity to discuss the details in Committee, and I shall say nothing more now, save that I am very glad the Bill has been introduced, and I am only sorry that it has been so long coming to this House.

Question put, and agreed to. Bill read a Second Time and referred to the Standing Committee on Law, &c.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): In relation to this Bill, may I ask if any Member who does not happen to be on the Standing Committee can send up an Amendment to it?

MR. W. H. SMITH: Certainly, Sir.

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL
[Lords.] (No. 249.)

Read a second time, and committed for Monday, 17th June.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (COLOURS) BILL. (No. 238).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [27th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday, 17th June.

OFFICIAL SECRETS [RE-COMMITTED] BILL. (No. 97).

Considered in Committee.

Amendment to Clause 2. — (*Mr. Attorney General*).

*SIR R. WEBSTER: The object of this Amendment is to limit the application of the clause with regard to the disclosure of official information to cases where the publication is contrary to the interests of the State or of any Department of the Government or otherwise contrary to the public interest.

Amendment agreed to.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I have to move a further Amendment to the same clause, applying its provisions to persons holding a contract with the Government and to the *employés* of such persons.

Amendment agreed to.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: I have to move a new clause, applying the provisions of the Act to persons inciting to the commission of an offence against it.

Clause agreed to.

Some further Amendments were also agreed to.

Bill reported as amended, to be considered to-morrow at two of the clock.

AUGMENTATION OF BENEFICES BILL.
(No. 231).

Order for Second Reading read.

*SIR R. WEBSTER: This is a Bill simply for the purpose of enabling the Lord Chancellor to apply certain funds already in his hands for the purpose of augmenting the revenues of certain livings and to enable the Lord Chancellor to contribute to the improvement of parsonage houses, providing the incumbent provides a similar sum to that proposed to be contributed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea): Last Session the Second Reading of this Bill was moved by the Attorney General without explanation. Now he has brought it on again, and I regret that he has not given us a longer description of it. He assumes it is a harmless Bill, but it seems to me that there is a good deal in it which is objectionable.

*Sir R. WEBSTER: It only enables the Lord Chancellor to deal with the proceeds of certain small livings in order that he may out of the proceeds thereof augment the incomes of other livings.

Mr. DILLWYN: I object altogether to the principle which is embodied in this Bill. I object to the proposal which renders it necessary that before the Lord Chancellor contributes towards any particular object defined in this Bill, the incumbent must take the hat round in order to get a sum equal to that proposed to be contributed. I do not think the Bill can properly be discussed now. There are a great many Members interested in the measure who are now absent, and did not expect it would come on, and I therefore beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Dillwyn*).

*Sir R. WEBSTER: If it is desired to have further discussion, I will not oppose the Motion. I should have thought, however, that it would have been possible to discuss the matter in Committee.

Debate adjourned till Monday, 17th June.

SUPPLY.

Resolution [31st May] reported.

CIVIL SERVICES.

Class II.

"That a sum, not exceeding £35,250, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the salaries and expenses of the Office of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works and Public Buildings."

*Mr. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): I desire to take this opportunity of referring to some observations made by the First Commissioner of Works a few days ago on the subject of the heraldic sculptures recently erected in Westminster Hall. The right hon. Gentleman, in defending these heraldic sculptures, said that these figures were of the same character as others already in the House. Well, Sir, that seems to me to be no defence, for there is a very great deal of bad sculpture about the House. Every one who is acquainted with the circumstances knows that Sir Charles Barry had forced upon him a particular style of architecture which involved elaborate sculptures; and if from the quantity of work forced on him he consequently produced many inferior works, that was no reason why the vicious system should still be pursued. This House is full of bad sculpture, and recently two grotesque figures have been set up in the Central Hall, intending to represent Earl Russell and the Earl of Iddesleigh; and it appears to me, in my humble judgment, that if any new sculptures are to be set up, pains should be taken not to imitate the bad example of past times, but to produce works which would be worthy of the nation. Now, Sir, my right hon. Friend, after having been interrogated several times, said that a Mr. Higgs had been employed to execute these heraldic sculptures in Westminster Hall. I do not object to heraldic sculptures, provided that they are good works of art; but if figures of this character are to be erected they ought to have been entrusted to some artist of well-established and known reputation, and not to an inferior person. The right hon. Gentleman says he would not have been justified in interfering with the architect, who was "the highest authority in this particular kind of architecture." This last expression is nothing less than nonsense. For what was this particular kind of architecture? It is to ignore Sir Chas. Barry, and to make the east side of the interior of Westminster Hall now an absolute contradiction to the west side. It was altogether erroneous to describe Mr. Pearson as a high authority in these matters. Mr. Pearson is an architect of a peculiar cast of mind, who abandons altogether the traditions of his predecessors. He imagines that he has found out something which nobody knew before. Well, Sir,

my right hon. Friend went on to say that the duty of the First Commissioner of Works was to select the best man as architect, and then leave him to do the best he could. But that is a proposition which I altogether deny. It is the duty of the First Commissioner of Works to look after him. Now, this brings me to the real question involved in this matter, and that is—what is the position of the right hon. Gentleman himself? The First Commissioner of Works, we are told, has control over Westminster Hall, but has no control over the House of Lords or Westminster Abbey, which—to use the words of the Lord Chief Justice—is in charge of a few irresponsible English clergymen. I suggest that the First Commissioner of Works should have greater powers conferred upon him; that he should have authority over all the great historical monuments in this country; and that a Committee of experts should be appointed to advise him. I would suggest that at an early period the Government should appoint a Commission or Committee to assist the right hon. Gentleman. His predecessors have had the assistance of experts on similar occasions; no one wants it more than my right hon. Friend. At one time that able architect, Mr. Pennthorne, was constantly consulted by the First Commissioner of Works, and in his days few mistakes were committed. Later on, Mr. James Fergusson acted as adviser to the First Commissioner, and although he was not equal to Mr. Pennthorne, still he gave very valuable assistance. I want some such course pursued in the future. I do not intend to move reduction of the Vote; but, having had an opportunity of placing this matter before the right hon. Gentleman, I hope it will receive the careful attention of the Government.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): I do not intend to follow the right hon. Gentleman in his vagaries. He proposed in one sentence that there should be a Committee of Monuments. I suppose that he meant a Committee to consider the question of ancient monuments.

*MR. G. A. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: No.

*SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID: The real point at which the observations of the right hon. Gentleman were aimed was whether the decorative animals put up in Westminster Hall are suitable or not. Whilst objecting to them, he suggested at the same time that the Chief Commissioner of Works ought to have greater authority over all public buildings and monuments. Now, these two things are inconsistent, and I venture to say that we had much better make the First Commissioner of Works responsible for his Department without any Committee to advise him. If there is one Minister more than another who is popular inside and outside this House, it is the First Commissioner of Works.

Resolution agreed to.

OFFICIAL SECRETS [EXPENSES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved—

"That it is expedient to authorize the payment out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the expenses of the Prosecution in Scotland or Ireland of a misdemeanour under any Act of the present Session to prevent the disclosure of official documents and information."

Resolution to be reported to-morrow at Two of the clock.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES BILL.

(No. 230.)

Order for the consideration of the Bill as amended by the Standing Committee, read.

MR. BIGGAR: I object.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I hope the hon. Gentleman will not persist in his objections. All my Amendments are of a verbal character, and none of the other Amendments are opposed.

Question, "That the Bill be now considered," put, and agreed to.

*MR. RAIKES moved in page 5, after Clause 12, to insert the following Clause:—

(1.) "An Inspector of weights and measures for any district shall, if required by the Postmaster General, verify and stamp, and from time to time inspect, the weights and measures and weighing instruments used in the Post Office.

(2.) The Board of Trade may from time to time, on the application and with the approval of the Postmaster General, make, vary, and revoke general regulations with respect to the procedure to be observed in the verification and stamping of the said weights and measures and weighing instruments, and the inspection thereof.

(3.) No fee shall be payable by the Postmaster General, or by any person in his employ, for or in respect of any such verification, stamping, or inspection."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this clause be added to the Bill."

MR. W. H. LAWSON (St. Pancras): Are we to understand that the 3rd Sub-section provides that the London Authorities will have to stamp all the weights and measures used by the Post Office throughout the Metropolis without payment of any fee?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: It is obviously to the interest of the public that the Post Office weights and measures should be stamped. There is no law now providing that they shall be stamped, and being the property of the State, and being used for the public within the district, it is thought proper they should be stamped without payment of fee.

*MR. W. H. LAWSON: The Metropolis suffer already, because the fines in London will be paid to the National Exchequer, and not to the local account. I think fees should be paid to London, considering the vast amount of business transacted in connection with the Post Office for the whole country.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause added.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.): I beg to move the new Clause, "Explanation of Law as to Bakers, 6 and 7 Will. 4, c. 37, s. 7," standing in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain).

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman cannot move an Amendment standing in the name of another hon. Member.

Other Amendments made.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: May I ask the House to read the Bill a third time?

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS: I object.

MR. CRAIG (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to move that the Bill be recommitted in order to move the insertion of the following new clause. In page 9, after clause 28, insert the following clause:—

BREAD.

"Nothing in the enactments referred to in the 4th Schedule to this Act shall render any baker or seller of bread, or the journeyman, servant, or other person employed by such baker or seller of bread, liable to any forfeiture or penalty for refusing to weigh in the presence of the purchaser any bread conveyed or carried out in any cart or other carriage, unless he is requested so to do by or on behalf of the purchaser."

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Perhaps I may explain that I will undertake that that Amendment which has been placed on the Paper by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham shall be moved in another place if the Third Reading is agreed to now.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS: I objected to the Third Reading being taken now in order that I might move the clause standing in the name of my right hon. Friend; but after the undertaking the President of the Board of Trade has given, I withdraw my objection.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read a third time," put and agreed to.

Bill read the third time and passed.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES) BILL. (No. 4.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday, 19th June.

REGISTRATION OF COUNTY ELECTORS (EXTENSION OF TIME) BILL. (No. 210.)

Order for the consideration of the Bill, as amended, read.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.): I will not move the Amendment I have placed on the Paper, but would be glad if the Attorney General will say whether the Bill alters the time for the completion of the registration?

SIR R. WEBSTER: There will not be the slightest interference with the preparation or the revision or completion of the Burgess List.

Bill, as amended, considered; read the third time, and passed.

House adjourned at twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 16.] FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [JUNE 20.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 4th June, 1889.

REGISTRATION OF COUNTY ELECTORS (EXTENSION OF TIME) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª, and to be printed. (No. 107.)

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES BILL.

Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday the 20th instant.—(*The Lord Balfour.*) (No. 108.)

WALTHAM ABBEY GUNPOWDER FACTORY BILL. (No. 65.)

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE (MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS) BILL. (No. 103.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Denman.*)

*LORD BALFOUR: I would point out that this Bill has not yet been printed and circulated. That, I take it, would be a sufficient reason in itself, according to the usual practice, for asking the House not to agree with the Motion just made. I do not, however, wish to shelter myself altogether behind this technicality, because I am authorized to say that the Government cannot agree to the Motion on the merits. I therefore propose that the Bill be read a second time this day four months.

Amendment moved, to leave out "now" and add at the end of the Motion, "this day four months."—(*The Lord Balfour.*)

EARL GRANVILLE: As the House will not, I trust, be sitting this day four months, I would suggest that the noble Lord should postpone his Motion for a reasonable time in order that the Government may have time to consider the merits of the Bill.

LORD DENMAN: As I find the time of registration is later than I thought, I will ask your Lordships' permission to postpone the Second Reading of the Bill until a day that may be convenient for your Lordships.

*LORD BALFOUR: I am willing to withdraw my Amendment under the altered circumstances with the permission of the House.

Amendment and Original Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 84.)

House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment; and to be read 3ª on Tuesday, the 18th instant.

HARES PRESERVATION BILL. (No. 72.)

Amendment reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3ª on Tuesday, the 18th instant.

ASSIZES RELIEF BILL. (No. 96.)

Read 3ª (according to order), with the Amendments, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ARBITRATION BILL. (No. 97.)

The Queen's consent, and the consent of His Royal Highness the Prince of

Wales, in right of his Duchy of Cornwall, signified; Bill read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

WELSH COLLEGES.

Return showing, in each of the years 1886, 1887, and 1888, the amount of any grants made to the Colleges of Bangor, Cardiff, and Aberystwith; the number of pupils and the number of professors or teachers in each; Ordered to be laid before the House.—(*The Lord Addington.*)

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to Tuesday 18th instant, at a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 4th June, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTORS.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that claims are being made upon county boroughs (such as Birmingham) for heavy contributions towards the cost of the recent elections of County Councils; and whether, in view of the fact that the county boroughs will derive no benefit whatever from such payments, if made, anything can be done to secure the abandonment and withdrawal of the claim?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. C. T. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have communicated with the Clerk to the Warwickshire County Council on the subject of this question, and I am informed that the account of the general expenditure of the county which has been delivered by the county to the borough of Birmingham, under Section 153 of the Municipal Corporation Act, 1882, includes an item of £507, part of the cost of the recent County Council elections. The county, as I understand, contend that they are justified in making this demand. As regards the question as to the legality of the claim, this is a matter which, of course, I am not empowered to determine; but I may draw attention to Section 103 (6) of the Local Government Act, which provides that the costs incurred by the returning officer in reference to the first election of the County Council shall be defrayed as expenses of the County Council; and it may be argued that the expenses of the County Council cannot be charged on a county borough. If, however, the claim can be enforced, I cannot but think that if the county borough is required to contribute towards the expenses attending the election of the County Council on which the borough is in no way represented, it is a case of some hardship; and it may be that the borough will think it right to bring this matter under the attention of the Commissioners, on whom will devolve the duty of adjusting the financial relations between the county and the county borough.

IRELAND—FAIR RENTS.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland if he is aware that the Land Commission have issued a list of only 129 cases for fixing fair rents on lands in the Unions of Dungannon, Armagh, and Clogher, the hearing to be in Dungannon, leaving several hundreds of cases without immediate prospect of hearing, though the tenants are being sued for arrears of unfixed rent; and will the Government take into their consideration the reported block in the Land Courts?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): The Land Commissioners inform me that there are, as stated, 129 cases on the list already issued for hearing from the Dungannon district. These are all the cases received up to the 31st of December, 1887. So soon as the present list of cases has been heard another list for another part of the Dungannon district will be issued.

MR. BLANE: May I suggest the desirability of us re-enforcing the Sub-Commission?

MR. MADDEN: I would remind the hon. Member that a number of Sub-Commissioners have been recently added for the purpose of disposing of cases more quickly.

IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS.

MR. BLANE: I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland if he can state the conditions under which Irish National teachers are permitted to attend the annual examinations for promotion to second class; if he is aware that many candidates for admission to the examinations who have never received unfavourable reports have been informed through their District Inspectors that they will not be allowed to attend; and if he will recommend that such teachers be permitted to attend the forthcoming July examinations?

MR. MADDEN: The Commissioners of National Education report that the conditions referred to are:—(a) A favourable report from the District Inspector as to the efficiency of the teacher, as such, during the previous year, and that his school has been in a satisfactory state in respect of cleanliness, discipline, and proficiency, and that the marks on the examination roll are satisfactory; (b) the not having merited severe censure for any offence within the two years preceding the annual examination; (c) nor having presented himself for promotion at previous year's examination wholly unprepared. The reports for the last year on the schools conducted by the several candidates for promotion have been carefully examined, and the Inspectors have been directed to summon to examination each candidate in whose case the foregoing conditions have been fulfilled. The cases of some teachers, however, are still under consideration.

THE TELEPHONE SYSTEM.

MR. RICHARD CHAMBERLAIN (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if his attention has been called to the tactics by which the financial group now commanding the telephone system of the kingdom has met his refusal to grant a license to the amalgamated company originally projected; whether his attention has been directed to the amount of vigorous capital to be created under the new scheme, and to the high charges to the public that will have to be maintained in consequence, and to the proportionately enhanced price that will be demanded should the nation ever decide to purchase; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will at once avail himself of the right reserved under the agreement with the telephone companies, and "establish, extend, maintain, and work" a telephone system such as would gradually bring the advantages of this invention within reach of the masses of the people?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): In reply to the hon. Member I have to state that I am aware of the proceedings of the telephone companies, and that the whole question of the telephonic service of the country is engaging my serious attention.

THE IRISH DRAINAGE BILLS.

MR. LEA (Londonderry S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the Bann and other Drainage Bills will be referred to a Select Committee, with power to hear the evidence of the inhabitants of the localities interested?

*MR. MADDEN: They will be referred to a Select Committee as hybrid Bills in the ordinary course.

THE REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS.

MR. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if it is a fact that the Registrar at Heywood, acting on instructions from the Registrar General, has withdrawn the facilities formerly accorded to the local Press for reporting births, marriages, and deaths?

*MR. RITCHIE: I am informed by the Registrar General that registrars are and always have been forbidden to allow to be published any statements of facts respecting the registration of births or deaths. His attention was lately called to a violation of this rule by certain registrars, by a complaint from private individuals that facts relating to their marriage or the birth of their children or the death of their relatives have appeared in local newspapers without their consent and contrary to their wishes, and he has reminded the registrars who have, in defiance of the regulations, imparted this information to newspapers (and have received a fee for so doing) that the information is given to them for official purposes only, and has insisted on the rule which has always been in existence being strictly

observed. With this action of the Registrar General I entirely concur.

INEQUALITY OF SENTENCES—SLEEPING IN THE OPEN AIR.

MR. BLANE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that Alice Minifie, of Sidmouth, and Sarah Sims, of Cheriton Bishop, were recently sentenced to six weeks' hard labour at the Petty Sessions of Exeter Castle 16th May, for sleeping on the ground, and that on the same charge the Magistrates at Hatherleigh sentenced James Seaton on the same date to seven days without hard labour; and if he would consider the sentences in these parallel cases?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): No, Sir; my attention has not been called to these cases. I cannot undertake to institute a comparison between two different cases heard by different Magistrates under different circumstances; but if any application is made to me to consider either of the cases named, I will give it my careful attention.

LABOURERS' HOLDINGS.

MR. BLANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the Government in forthcoming legislation contemplate fixing a statutory term for labourers in their holdings at a fair rent fixed by the Land Commission?

*MR. MADDEN: I am not aware of any forthcoming legislation to which the question of the hon. Member is applicable.

MR. BLANE: I beg to give notice that I will introduce a Bill on the subject.

TROUBLE IN ZULULAND.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Secretary of State, without having before him the Reports of the proceedings before the Special Judicial Commission and of the evidence given, has, in a letter written to the Secretary of the Aborigines' Protection Society by his direction, refused to grant a new and independent inquiry into the recent troubles in Zululand, and their causes; and, whether he will re-consider this decision, and withhold his judgment until the Report and evidence given on both sides are received and have been fully considered by him?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. de WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The words of the letter to which the hon. Member appears to refer were—

> "Her Majesty's Government do not feel justified . . . in again postponing the settlement of Zululand, in order to re-open all the controverted questions by a fresh inquiry."

They adhere to their opinion that a new and independent inquiry would be not only unprofitable, but injurious; although they are withholding their final judgment both as to the punishment of the prisoners and as to the future administration of Zululand until they have been able to consider fully the report and evidence.

MR. T. ELLIS: Are the prisoners now detained as ordinary prisoners and subjected to ordinary punishment?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I believe they are so detained, but are not subject to punishment.

THE TRIALS AT EKOWE.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the evidence of the witnesses on behalf of the Crown at the recent trials at Ekowe, which proved that Mr. R. H. Addison, the Resident Magistrate of the Nawandwe district, at Sisebu's kraal, tried to extort evidence by torture, flogging, and isolating men, and then firing a gun to make each separate man think the other was shot; and, whether the Government propose, in the face of such evidence, to allow the Magistrate in question to return to his duties?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: The evidence has not yet arrived, and the Secretary of State does not know whether there is any foundation for the allegations quoted by the hon. Member. If they were made, Mr. Addison will probably have given his contradictions or explanations, and Her Majesty's Government obviously cannot at present express any opinion upon his alleged conduct.

CHARGE OF ASSAULTING THE POLICE.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Mr. John Beck, shoemaker, of Bottesford, Leicestershire, who, on the unsupported testimony of Police Constable Cunningham, in spite of rebutting evidence of two respectable witnesses, was sentenced by the Bench of Magistrates, a majority of whom were clergymen, at Belvoir, on the 20th May, to one month's imprisonment with hard labour, without the option of a fine, for an assault on the police; whether a constable is acting legally in entering a man's house at night and, as attested by two witnesses, handcuffing him there, and whilst he was on the ground committing an assault on him, and finally apprehending him on a charge of assaulting the police; whether the Magistrates refused to allow the defendant's solicitor to examine the constable as to his previous conduct as a policeman; and, whether he will order an inquiry into the whole proceedings, and also into the past conduct of Police Constable Cunningham?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir; my attention has not been called to the case referred to by the hon. Member, but I will cause immediate inquiries to be made.

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (PILOTAGE) BILL.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the opinion of the Select Committee appointed on pilotage last Session, as stated in their Report—

"That having regard to the views expressed that the time had arrived when the exemption of the owner from liability for damage done by his ship when the ship was placed in charge of a pilot, by compulsion of law, should cease to exist,"

and also—

"That such exemption was indefensible and was inimical to the safety of life and property at sea,"

he will state the reasons why he has disregarded the recommendations of the Select Committee in having omitted to introduce a clause dealing with the subject in the Merchant Shipping (Pilotage) Bill now before the House?

MR. LAFONE (Southwark, Bermondsey): Upon the same question I have to ask the right hon. Gentleman why the Bill did not contain a clause to carry out the recommendation of the Select Committee, which sat last Session on the subject of pilotage, to make the owners of vessels liable for damage done to other craft notwithstanding that a pilot was on board of such vessel?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I have found so much opposition on the part of the shipowners to the embodiment in the Merchant Shipping (Pilotage) Bill of the recommendation of the Select Committee of last Session "The exemption of the owner from liability for damage done by his ship when the ship was placed in charge of a pilot, by compulsion of law, should cease to exist," that I have thought it wiser, having regard to the small amount of time for legislation, to omit the clause in question from the Bill.

MR. CAUSTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman support such a clause if it is proposed?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I am afraid that the introduction of such a clause would defeat legislation altogether. I should not like to give any pledge on the matter.

THE NEW RAILWAY RATES.

MR. HULSE (Salisbury): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade how many notices of objection he has received against the new classifications and proposed new maximums of the various railway companies (a) from Chambers of Commerce; (b) from Municipal Corporations and other representative bodies; (c) from individuals, traders, and trading companies affected; what steps the Board of Trade will be prepared to take to facilitate the hearing of protests and objections; and if it can be found possible to hold the inquiries either locally or in the large towns in the centre of the districts affected by the proposed increase of charges?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Over 3,000 objections to the Schedules of the various railway companies have been received by the Board of Trade. As the time for sending them in only ex-

pired yesterday, I have not yet been able to analyze these objections, and I cannot therefore sub-divide them in the manner referred to in the hon. Member's question. I am of opinion that an attempt should, in the first instance, be made to settle such points as may be capable of solution without a formal hearing in the manner contemplated by the 24th Section of the Act. The railway companies have been, therefore, requested to arrange for interviews between the objectors and the representatives of the companies in the locality of the former. Copies of the Circular will be laid on the Table of the House. As regards the formal hearings to be held later, I can only state at present that every possible arrangement will be made to enable the objectors conveniently to support their objections before the Board of Trade.

INDIA — PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT—APPOINTMENT OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.

MR. HUBBARD (Bucks, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India if he can assure the House that in the future allotment of posts in the Public Works Department of India the civilian engineers will receive a fair share of the higher appointments, as compared with their military brother engineers in the same Department?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The hon. Member has correctly indicated the principle upon which such posts are allotted.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): Are we to understand that there has been no change in the system which has been adopted in regard to these appointments?

*SIR J. GORST: I do not quite understand the question of the hon. Gentleman. In reply to the question on the Paper, I have already stated what the principle will be in the selections for higher appointments.

IRELAND — FISHERIES DEPARTMENT REPORTS.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House copies of any Reports on the subject of trawling made by the Irish Fisheries Department to the Executive Government during the last two years?

MR. MADDEN: Inquiries with regard to these reports will be made.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION—THE *TIMES* WITNESSES.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he received a letter from James Mullet, when in Millbank Prison, complaining of the way in which the agents for the *Times* had been attempting to tamper with him; and, whether he has any objection to read this letter, or to lay a copy of it upon the Table of the House?

MR. MATTHEWS: I received a petition from this prisoner on the 2nd of March in which he alleged that an agent of the *Times* had called and made offers to him, which he refused. He did not state what those offers were, and his communication chiefly referred to his present treatment and the state of his health. I cannot set the precedent of reading to the House or laying on the Table a communicatien from a prisoner to the Home Office, which is always regarded as confidential.

MR. SEXTON: Has the right hon. Gentleman taken any action on the statement of the petition that inducements had been held out to him to give false evidence?

MR. MATTHEWS: There was nothing to that effect in the petition which I received.

MR. SEXTON: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the prisoner alleged in his petition that offers had been made to him?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have correctly stated the effect of the communication. I cannot lay it on the Table, but I will show it to the right hon. Gentleman if he wishes to see it.

MR. SEXTON: I am no more interested in it than the public are. What I want to know is whether it is in accordance with the usage of the Department, when a prisoner states in a petition to the Home Secretary that offers have been made to him to induce him to give false evidence, that no action should be taken.

MR. MATTHEWS: The prisoner did not state that offers had been made to him to induce him to give false evidence.

MR. SEXTON: For what purpose did he allege that offers had been made to him?

MR. MATTHEWS: He did not state what offers had been made to him.

THE REFORMATORY SHIP *CUMBERLAND.*

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the reformatory to which the four boys, who recently were supposed to have set fire to the reformatory ship *Cumberland*, with 400 boys on board, off Greenock, have been transferred, as a result of a representation from the Lord Advocate of Scotland upon the subject, or whether the boys are still at large on license; and, whether he will see that these four boys, who admitted their guilt to the Commanders of the vessel, shall undergo the full period of penal detention to which they were originally sentenced in a reformatory on shore?

MR. MATTHEWS: The *Cumberland* is an industrial school and not a reformatory. The boys in question were acquitted of the charge of setting fire to the ship by a verdict of "Not proven"; and the Executive Committee applied to me for their discharge, which I declined to grant. In the meantime, they were liberated by the managers on license under Section 27 of the Industrial Schools Act, 1866. I have no control over the discretion of the managers in granting or renewing this license, and I have no power by law to order the boys to be sent to a reformatory.

ADMIRAL FIELD: I will call attention to the subject on the Vote for the Reformatories.

EXTRADITIONS—THE PROSECUTION OF MARTIN MEYER.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that Martin Meyer, a German, charged with embezzlement in Germany, has been repeatedly remanded at Bow Street Police Court at the request of the German Consulate, and that evidence against the prisoner is still not forthcoming; whether he is aware that the nominal prosecutor in Germany has signed a statement to the effect that he does not propose to proceed with the prosecution; whether he is also aware that the prisoner has taken a prominent part in the politics of Germany; and, whether, in these circumstances, in the event of the Magistrate committing the prisoner, he will make special inquiry into the case, and take special precautions, before he issues his warrant for extradition?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to this case. The answer to the second paragraph is in the affirmative. No statement has been made to me with regard to the allegation in the third paragraph, but I understand that a statement to that effect was made on behalf of the prisoner at the Police Court. A letter was received from the German Government last night withdrawing the application for Meyer's extradition, and was at once sent to Bow Street, and the man will be discharged to-day.

ESSENTIAL SITES FOR STRATEGICAL PURPOSES.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the sum of £20,000, the cost of "essential sites" for strategical purposes, is included under Vote 13 of the Army Estimates; and, whether it is intended to take the Votes for the Army in their numerical order?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The answer to both of these questions is in the affirmative.

GOVERNMENT WRITERS.

MR. OCTAVIUS V. MORGAN (Battersea): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, as the Government are now paying 1s. per hour for writers supplied by Messrs. Waterlow and Vacher, the Treasury have any intention of paying the same amount to, or improving in any way whatever the present position of the writers employed directly by the Government, and more particularly those writers who were appointed prior to the 12th February, 1876, and who, 15 years ago, were recommended to be paid 1s. per hour by the Commission of Inquiry presided over by Sir Lyon Playfair?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The

Government do not see reason for altering the rate of payment now granted to copyists. The rate paid to a law stationer for supplying copyists to meet a temporary emergency will probably always differ from the rate paid to men on the register of the Civil Service Commission.

IRELAND—THE R. I. CONSTABULARY.

MR. HENRY J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland whether he can now state how information can be obtained as to the action that has been taken in reference to the recommendations of the Committee on Royal Irish Constabulary in 1883?

MR. MADDEN: The question is under the consideration of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary.

EVICTIONS IN DONEGAL—CONDUCT OF THE MILITARY.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is true that the 2nd Dragoons, Royal Scots Greys, were recently on duty at the evictions on the Olphert estate, in the county of Donegal; whether Captain J. A. W. O'N. Torrens was in command of a company of the Royal Scots Greys on that occasion; whether he is aware that a circular has been issued in the county of Londonderry, and the North of Ireland generally, bearing the signature of a J. A. Torrens, Somerset, Coleraine, soliciting subscriptions for Mr. Wybrants Olphert, to recoup him for certain rents alleged to have been withheld pending the concession of reductions demanded by his tenantry; whether the Captain J. A. W. O'N. Torrens, given in the Army List as belonging to the 2nd Dragoons, Scots Greys, is the same officer whose name is attached to the circular referred to; and, if so, whether such interference in a political question is permissible on the part of an officer engaged on military duty in the district; and, whether he will take any, and what, steps in the matter?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I answered part of this question yesterday, but I am afraid that I cannot answer the remainder until after Whitsuntide.

MR. P. O'BRIEN: I beg to ask if the right hon. Gentleman would make an inquiry as to a circular which was recently sent out by Captain Torrens?

*MR. E. STANHOPE replied in the affirmative.

TYPHOID FEVER IN THE DUBLIN BARRACKS.

MR. SIDEBOTHAM (Cheshire, Hyde): I beg to ask the Secretary for War how many cases of typhoid fever have occurred in the Gloucester Regiment since it was stationed at the Ship Street Barracks, Dublin, and how many cases were there at the Fulwood Barracks, Preston, during a similar period; whether, to insure proper nursing and medical attendance, it has been necessary to remove an officer to a civil hospital in Dublin; and, if so, who is responsible for the necessary expense; and, whether any officer in Dublin has recovered from typhoid fever who has not been removed to a civil hospital?

MR. E. STANHOPE: Six cases of enteric fever have occurred in the Gloucester Regiment since its arrival in Dublin, but as one of these cases was developed eight days after arrival, it is probable that the disease was contracted before the man left Preston. There was only one case of enteric fever at Preston during the year 1888. Officers are, when they or their friends request it, removed to a civil hospital for treatment at their own expense; but since 1886 six officers have been treated in military hospitals in Dublin for enteric fever and have recovered.

RAILWAY TIME TABLES.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the fact that the alterations in the time tables for the month of June of North British Railway Company were only published after "Bradshaw's Guide" had gone to press; and, if steps can be taken to compel railway companies to publish their time tables sufficiently early to enable the public to become acquainted with alterations before they come into force?

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: No, Sir; my attention has not been called to the points raised by the hon. Member, but the Board of Trade have no power to compel railway companies to publish the alterations in their time tables at any particular period. In 1878,

in consequence of a communication from the Board of Trade, the Associated Companies stated that they would endeavour to publish any alterations which they might make in their train arrangements at each station one week before the expiration of each month, and also advertise them as early as possible. Having regard to this arrangement, I have directed that the attention of the North British Railway Company should be called to the question of the hon. Member.

THE SALVATION ARMY IN SWITZERLAND.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT (Manchester, S.W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he has seen a recent account of friends who have visited Miss Stirling at Chillon, which states that she is prostrate and ill; and, if Her Majesty's Government will make an effort to have the remainder of her sentence remitted?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): No information has been received of Miss Stirling being ill. Her Majesty's Government have done all on her behalf that they could with propriety. I regret to say that Her Majesty's Minister found that the Cantonal Authorities, with whom the discretionary power would rest, consider that they have not authority to remit the remainder of her sentence; but Mr. Leveson Gower was assured that in case of Miss Stirling being seriously ill, she would be released from her imprisonment.

PARACHUTE EXHIBITIONS.

MR. H. L. W. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): I wish to ask the Home Secretary whether, another accident having happened to a parachutist, at the Alexandra Palace, resulting in a broken arm and other injuries, he will take any and what precautions to prevent these demoralizing exhibitions not less dangerous to the performers than brutalizing to the community?

MR. MATTHEWS: I must ask for notice of the question.

IRELAND—LUGGACURRAN EVICTIONS —ALLEGED OUTRAGE BY SOLDIERS.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask if the attention of the Government has been called to the reported outrage upon a woman by soldiers at the Luggacurran evictions, and if it is intended to remove the detachment of military from that neighbourhood?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I have not received any information in regard to the occurrence, but I have directed inquiries to be made.

THE WHITSUNTIDE HOLIDAYS.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury on what conditions he will consent to extend the Whitsuntide holidays to Monday, the 17th?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am anxious to meet as far as possible the views of the House. If we are able to complete Class 2 in Committee of Supply except the Irish Estimates, it will be in the power of the Government to propose an extension of the holidays until Monday week.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): At what time will the right hon. Gentleman propose the adjournment for the holidays?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: When the Votes are concluded.

DONEGAL INDUSTRIAL FUND.

Copy ordered—

"Of the Report received from Mrs. Ernest Hart on the subject of the grant by Parliament of £1,000 to the Donegal Industrial Fund."—(*Mr. Childers.*)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS [SALARIES, &c.] (No. 188.)

Committee to consider of authorizing the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of salaries or remuneration to, and of the expenses incurred by, the Boundary Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners, Secretary, Officers, and persons appointed under any Act of the present Session to make Supplementary Provisions for amending the Laws relating to Local Government in Scotland (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Monday, 17th June.

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT [REMUNERATION.] (No. 199.)

Committee to consider of authorizing the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of Remuneration to any person who may be directed by the Commissioners in Lunacy to visit a single patient under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to amend the Acts relating to Lunatics (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Monday, 17th June.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE
[SALARIES, &c.] (No. 221.)

Committee to consider of authorizing the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of any salaries and expenses that may become chargeable under the provisions of any Act of the present Session, for establishing a Board of Agriculture for Great Britain (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Monday, 17th June.

LIVERY FRANCHISE (LONDON) ABOLITION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James Rowlands, Bill to abolish the Livery Franchise in the City of London, ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Causton, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, and Mr. Pickersgill.

Bill presented and read first time. [Bill 266.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.

Resolution [3rd June] reported.

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS II.

"That a sum, not exceeding £5,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, in aid of the Mercantile Marine Fund."

Resolution agreed to.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £23,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890, for Her Majesty's Foreign and other Secret Services."

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Since my Motion was placed on the Paper a Vote on account has been taken, and I therefore beg to move the reduction of the Vote, not by £30,000, but by £20,000. The only new feature of the Vote this year is that it is £5,000 less than it was the year before. I wish to urge, first, by way of repetition, the general objection I have taken to this Vote on other occasions, and next to deal with it by way of special objections in consequence of the answers by the Home Secretary to questions which have been put to him during the present Session. With regard to the general objection I would refer the Committee to the evidence given before the Public Accounts Committee by Sir William Dunbar in support of the doctrine that all payments of every character made out of the monies voted by this House ought to be audited by somebody. Although last year that argument was met by the statement that each Minister made upon his honour a declaration as to the disposal of the money, I think I shall be able to show the Committee as to the Home Office at any rate, and possibly at the Foreign Office and the Irish Office, that that declaration is utterly illusory. The Foreign Office has not expressed its opinion in any answer, but the answer of the Home Secretary has been so distinct as not to leave the possibility of any doubt. Sir William Dunbar says—

"The only reason hitherto brought forward in justification of departmental resistance to the law of Parliament is that if proofs of the application of Civil Service money were placed in the hands of the Controller and Auditor General such a course might admit him to the knowledge of some of the purposes, covered by that vote which, in the interests of the public service, should be kept undivulged. In my judgment the same trust which may be reposed in a subordinate officer should be extended to the Controller and Auditor General, who is a high Parliamentary functionary, holding one of the most responsible offices under the Crown, and therefore bound by every obligation of duty and honour to act with discretion. It may be safely assumed that so far from revealing anything that would compromise the interests of the State, the only items of the Secret Service accounts likely to be challenged publicly would be payments, if any should occur, applied to other than Secret Service purposes."

Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Ryan have expressed a similar opinion. Now, it is quite clear from what has occurred in the case I am going to refer to specially, that disbursements of Secret Service money have been made by persons in no way under the control of a Minister at all. Therefore the declaration of the Minister of the Department in which Secret Service money is expended is a declaration of no real value and affords no protection, because in some cases it is abundantly manifest, and may be so in all cases, that the Minister does not know into whose hands the money passes, to what purpose it is ultimately applied, or

whether or not it has been used for some purpose for which this House ought to have been called upon to vote it, and therefore have had an opportunity of expressing an opinion as to the desirability of the expenditure. The occasion I am going to refer to is the case on sworn evidence of the man Beach, who has been repeatedly spoken of in this House, and whom the Home Secretary describes by the alias he gave to himself of Major le Caron; le Caron is a person who had been employed and paid for many years, according to his own evidence; and, as far as I am aware, he has never been paid out of any money voted by this House other than the Secret Service money. He could only have been paid out of the money at the disposal of the Foreign Office, the Irish Office, or the Home Office. I am inclined to think from the evidence of Le Caron himself that he was not paid out of the Foreign Office money. It appears to be clear both from Le Caron's own statements and from a letter sent to the *Times*, and read by a Member of the Cabinet before it was sent to the *Times*, that he was paid by moneys which came solely from the Home Office. Therefore I am not inclined, in connection with this case, to make any attack upon the Foreign Office except the general objection that it is possible that there, too, there may be agents of a similar character—agents the office are not directly acquainted with, but into whose hands the money goes to be applied to purposes of which the Minister has no knowledge. Nor have I any evidence to connect this man, Le Caron, with the Irish Office, and it is solely with the Home Office that I feel justified in connecting him. Mr. Anderson appears to have an office at the Home Office, and Le Caron appears to have been specially connected with the Home Office in what he was doing, but absolutely nothing was known at the Home Office of him. The present and some time Home Secretary did not know his name; and two other ex-Home Secretaries in the House have never heard his name; and it is clear, therefore, that Le Caron has been employed and has received money out of the Secret Service Fund, and that he corresponded with no person responsible to this House, but with a gentleman who happened to be connected with the Home Office, and who happened to have access to the Secret Service money through the Minister, but who was left entirely uncontrolled in the disbursements he made to Le Caron, and was required to give no account of the reports of Le Caron whatever their nature may have been. So much was that so that these reports were kept together not as part of the archives of the Home Office, but as part of a private—I will not say friendly—correspondence between Mr. Anderson and Le Caron, and were absolutely regarded by the Home Secretary himself as being documents over which the Home Office itself had no control, but the private property of this person to be had by him when he pleased, and how he pleased, and to be done with what he pleased. I would suggest that when the present Home Secretary, following the example of his predecessor, made a declaration on his honour as to the application of the money disbursed by Mr. Anderson, he must have trusted blindly to Mr. Anderson. I do not suggest that Mr. Anderson is not a gentleman perfectly worthy of that trust, but what I do suggest is that a practice of this nature opens the door to the widest possible misuse of the public money. And what is true in the case of Le Caron will probably be equally true in the case of every other agent occupying a similar position to Le Caron. It is clear that even Mr. Anderson did not know what Le Caron did with the whole of the money, because Le Caron in his evidence, which was unchallenged, said that he made payments to people who were not named. Perhaps the whole of the £35,000 this year and the whole of the £40,000 of last year found its way into the hands of persons whom I will not describe, because no description could properly do justice to them. This is a system likely to lead to horrible crimes, for there is a tendency on the part of such men to get up the conspiracy for which they receive the most money—a tendency to manufacture crime. In 1833 there was an investigation by this House as to the application of moneys from the Home Office, and Mr. Richard Mayne, Assistant Commissioner of Police, afterwards Sir Richard Mayne, showed that the money paid out of this very fund was applied in England to paying men to buy pistols for the purpose of pretending that there was a conspiracy of physical force, for which allegation there

was not one word of truth. I say that money of this kind becomes a temptation to manufacture crime, and it would be quite possible for the Home Secretary to say, as Sir Richard Mayne said in 1833,

"I know nothing of any irregularities committed by any of the agents of the Home Office."

But when you employ scoundrels to do scoundrel-like things crime generally results from their employment. Therefore I ask the Committee to vote for the reduction of the Vote as a protest against the possibility of the manufacture of crime. I do not pretend that no Department should have the control of moneys not voted by this House; but the expenditure of such moneys should come under the supervision of the Comptroller and Auditor General. Of course, we now have the assurance of the Government that this money is not applied in payment of anything which the House could be asked to vote; but that has not always been so, and although the Government may answer for themselves and those with whom they deal directly, it is impossible for them to control other agents who may be employed indirectly. The moment a Minister parts with money to some one who does not account to him for it, all control over that money is necessarily lost. I have felt bound to make this protest, and I hope the House will divide on the question. I beg to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £20,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,000, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Bradlaugh*).

SIR J. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I have always felt that it is necessary to provide a certain amount of Secret Service money. No doubt, the employment of Secret Service money in past years has been very much abused and used for purposes that were never intended—sometimes for purposes which ought to have been voted by this House, and sometimes for a purpose—namely, to control elections—for which the House never would have voted it. The real question is whether we have now sufficient security that the money is properly applied. I think we have, and I notice also a gradual reduction in the amount of the Vote. So far as Le Caron is concerned, whether his employment was judicious or not, it is distinctly one of those cases in which Secret Service money must always be employed. If the Government are to defeat a Fenian or any other conspiracy, they must employ secret agents, and they must pay those agents. I think that after the declaration of the Government as to the future application of Secret Service money, the Committee ought not to be divided on the question of the employment of Le Caron, which is past and done with.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W): The Home Secretary says that he never heard of Le Caron or of the documents which were sent over to him, but nevertheless Le Caron swore that he was in receipt of a fixed salary of so much a year. I heard Le Caron's evidence, and so far as the value of it is concerned, it was simply a lot of flimsy gossip which any ordinary newspaper correspondent could have supplied. The correspondence Le Caron sent to Anderson could not be said to belong to Anderson, and therefore in giving that correspondence to Houston (a man who had swindled the *Times*) Anderson simply stole it. It was a correspondence which extended over some years, and Anderson never obtained permission from the Home Secretary to hand it over. It was supposed to be of great value, and ought to have been kept with great care. I think the Committee are indebted to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) for bringing the matter forward. I think the Committee would do well to mark their sense of the indiscreet way in which these things are managed. If you want secret information, in the name of goodness pay for it, but do not keep it for years in the hands of an irresponsible person, and allow that irresponsible person to steal it without the fear of any punishment whatever.

MR. MATTHEWS: The subject raised by the hon. Member for Northampton is one upon which my lips are almost sealed, as the hon. Member must be perfectly well aware. The hon. Member's speech is an argument against having any Secret Service money at all. [MR. BRADLAUGH: Hear, hear.] I do not propose to argue that question with the hon. Member. I confess that so far as my personal feelings are concerned, there is no part of the

duties of my office more disagreeable than the disposal of Secret Service money; but so long as it exists it stands to reason that I must give no account of it, for if I did, it would cease to be Secret Service money, and therefore, I repeat, my lips are sealed. I can, therefore, only make a few general observations in reply to the hon. Member for Northampton. The hon. Member says there is a risk of Secret Service money getting into improper hands. I am afraid that this is inseparable from the necessary employment of sub-agents. That is a circumstance which imposes great caution and circumspection upon those who dispose of the money, but it is a circumstance which will not be met by the suggestion of the hon. Member that the Controller and Auditor General should audit the expenditure. We do not find that the persons to whom Secret Service money is necessarily dispensed are always trustworthy. One remedy would be that there should be no Secret Service money at all, but that is not the point put by the hon. Member for Northampton. The hon. Member also says that Secret Service money leads to the employment of that hateful creature, happily unknown in this country, the *agent provocateur*. Since I have been responsible for the expenditure of Secret Service money I have spared no pains to prevent the employment of such persons as *agents provocateurs*. There was a system which, for aught I know, may have prevailed before I took office—I do not profess to know anything of what happened in the time of my predecessors—and that is, to wait until a crime is what is called "ripe" before interfering. So far, however, as I am concerned, I have done all I can to discourage such a system. My instructions have always been that no dallying or trifling with a projected crime shall be allowed for a moment, for that mode of action is precisely what led to the existence of *agents provocateurs*. It has been said, and it is perfectly true, that some Secret Service money has gone of late to persons who were unknown to the Minister responsible for the distribution of the fund. There is nothing extraordinary in that. Information is constantly coming from persons whose names are only known to one agent of the public service, and that agent would be acting dishonourably if he were to reveal the names. Every criminal Department receives information from men whose names cannot be disclosed. Of course sometimes the information is not trustworthy, but at other times most valuable information is given by accomplices whose consciences have at last been touched. The real safeguard against a useless expenditure of money is for the Minister to take care that his principal assistant is a thoroughly capable man. Having said that, I cannot but take advantage of the opportunity to renew my strong and emphatic testimony to the capability of Mr. Anderson. As to Le Caron, his name, as I have already told the House, was unknown to me until a short time ago. I have nothing to subtract from the declaration which I made on a former occasion with reference to Le Caron, nor do I desire to amplify it. There are, it cannot be denied, obvious objections to any system of Secret Service money, but on the other hand great advantages accrue from it. The Committee will, perhaps, remember a prosecution successfully undertaken not long ago against two men whose design it certainly was to use dynamite in London, probably in this very House. In that case a great public danger was averted by the discovery of the intended crime, and that discovery would never have been made if there had been no Secret Service Fund. The amount of the fund is diminishing, and is smaller than it was a few years ago; and taking all the circumstances of the case into consideration, I think the Committee will be doing wisely in continuing the Vote.

*Mr. BRADLAUGH: The amount of the fund may be less than it was a few years ago, but it certainly is far larger than it was 50 years ago, so that if it diminishes at the same rate in the next half century we shall not have gained very much. I quite feel that the right hon. Gentleman is within his right in refusing to answer my statements, but there was one fatal flaw in the reply he made. I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the Controller and Auditor General ought not to audit these payments, not because he would not be a proper person to audit them, but because the money has already been paid, and it would be too late. If that is so, the Controller and Auditor General would be a useless officer altogether, because his audit only comes after the money

has been applied. But I remember a case in which the Controller and Auditor General drew attention to an item of several thousand pounds. A correspondence took place in regard to it, which extended over several years, and although the money was never given back, the effect of the discussion was to prevent the occurrence of a similar item in future. The right hon. Gentleman says that it is very often necessary to pay secretly for information about crimes. In connection with that point I may remind the right hon. Gentleman that in one of the worst scandals that has ever been disclosed in our Detective Department men were implicated who stood high in the Department, and who were relied on specially as efficient distributors of Secret Service money.

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): There can be no misconception as to the position which the Controller and Auditor General occupies, and the controversy which has been raised on various occasions as to what the duties of the Controller and Auditor General are in reference to this Vote. The House of Commons came to a definite decision upon that point. The House of Commons vote annually £30,000 or £40,000 for Secret Service. That very expression implies that no one is to know to what special purposes the money is devoted, and, therefore, if the Controller and Auditor General were to seek to ascertain how the fund is expended he would be exceeding his powers. This money is practically dispensed by the Cabinet, and no Minister outside the Cabinet knows anything about its appropriation. In the Cabinet itself special precaution is taken to prevent any misappropriation of the money, for every Minister concerned in its expenditure has to sign the following declaration:—

"I hereby certify that the amount actually expended by me or under my direction for Secret Service in the year ending March 1, 18— was so much, and that the balance in my hands was so much; and I further solemnly declare that the whole sum so expended has been paid for purposes to which, in my belief, Parliament intended that Secret Service money may be allowed, and that no part of the sum has been paid for any service which has been or could properly have been provided for by an ordinary public department."

Every Minister who spends one penny of the Secret Service money has to make that declaration, and if the 12 or 15 gentlemen who form the Cabinet can be entrusted with the management of the domestic and foreign policy of the British Empire, surely they can be entrusted with the expenditure of £30,000 or £40,000. That the money may be spent foolishly is possible, but you must trust to the Home Secretary, and if he is not fit to be trusted to that extent, then he is not fit to be Home Secretary at all. On a former occasion a Chancellor of the Exchequer said—

"I wish to point out that if Secret Service money be granted at all it must be granted so that Parliament cannot trace it. It is a vote granted to Ministers for a public purpose as to which Parliament trusts absolutely to the discretion of Ministers on the condition and understanding that the employment of the money shall be absolutely secret."

The hon. Member has referred to certain evidence given before the Special Commission, I submit to the House that the time has not arrived for us to review those proceedings. When that Commission closes its investigation, it will be not only our right, but our duty to examine the proceedings from beginning to end in all its details. The present proposal, however, would by a side-wind condemn that which is, I think, a very necessary part of our constitutional system—namely the trusting of Ministers with moderate sums of money for Secret Services. Under these circumstances, while recognizing the consistency of the course, my hon. Friend, the Member for Northampton, has taken in this matter, whatever Government has been in power, I think that if, after his speech he takes a division to-day, it will be capable of being misunderstood, because it will appear that one issue is being put before the country, whereas the House itself is voting on another issue. We cannot accept his Amendment without voting against the principle of Secret Service, and I do not think that a large number of Gentlemen on either side of the House are prepared to abolish Secret Service altogether.

*Mr. BRADLAUGH: May I say that with respect to the Parnell Commission I carefully refrained from making any reference to it except so far as the facts had been stated in this House in answer to questions put either to the Chief Secretary for Ireland or to the Home Secretary.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I wish to say one word in support of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton. I can quite understand hon. Members agreeing with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), but we have to remember that this Vote affects Ireland as well as England. I have no hesitation whatever in saying that, as far as England is concerned, any money spent under this Vote is spent in a legitimate way. With regard to Ireland, I think the case is wholly different, and I firmly believe that the fact that such a large sum of money is voted every year for Secret Service—for purposes which will never be explained in this House—really tends to the creation of crime in Ireland. You must remember that the country is filled with informers, and it has been proved over and over again that informers in Ireland have themselves got up crimes. The case of the informer Cullinane is a case in point. I have no hesitation in saying that the policeman, Whelahan, would not have lost his life and the raid very likely would not have taken place, but for the work of that informer. What led the informer to engage in the matter at all? It was the hope of being paid by the Government out of the Secret Service Fund. I am positive that there are numbers of men in Ireland who make it their business to endeavour to get information of some kind or other implicating people in the commission of crime, solely and simply with the object of obtaining this money. I regard it as a most dangerous thing in a country like Ireland to hold out to men of the Cullinane type inducements to get up bogus informations in the hope of obtaining money from the Government. It would be an extremely interesting thing to ascertain how much of the large sum of money annually voted is spent in connection with Ireland. I am certain that a great proportion of it goes in keeping up this wretched, miserable class of informers in Ireland. With regard to the money Le Caron is alleged to have obtained from the Secret Service Fund, all I can say is that the Government did not get very good value for their money. I have great pleasure in supporting the Motion.

MR. BIGGAR: I should like to say a word or two in reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler.) He says that a complaint is made against Cabinet Ministers. The complaint, as far as I am concerned, is not against the Cabinet Ministers at all, but against the obscure persons to whom the Cabinet Ministers delegate their authority, and who would not have been known by name even now but for an accident. In Le Caron's case the money was paid through an obscure person who turned out to be a thief, and stole the papers he got from Le Caron. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary told us that Mr. Anderson was a man of high personal character.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is treating the name of a public servant with great freedom. His remarks are not relevant to the discussion.

MR. BIGGAR: Well, Sir, the money came through this particular person. I say that it may be perfectly right for a Cabinet Minister to have the distribution of this money, but that he ought not to hand it over to people who turn out to be exceedingly improper characters.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 43, Noes 141.—(Division List, No. 137.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £6,595, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Secretary for Scotland and Subordinate Officers."

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I rise to move a reduction of this Vote on the ground that the manner in which the citizens of Glasgow have been treated by the Scotch Office has involved them in great and needless expense in the matter of the Glasgow Boundaries Commission. The question of extending the municipal boundaries of Glasgow has again and again been brought before this House, in the shape of private Bills, but unsuccessfully. In 1886 there was a severe struggle on a private Bill between Glasgow and some of the adjoining burghs, in regard to annexation, and the Bill was ultimately thrown out.

Mr. Caldwell, one of the bailies of Glasgow, in his evidence before the Committee on private Bill legislation last year, gave a history of the matter. He said that in 1886 a Bill for the extension of the Glasgow boundaries went before a Committee of the House of Commons, and eventually was sent to the House of Lords. The proceedings were then interrupted by a dissolution, but, by an order of the House, they were carried over to the new Parliament. At the conclusion of the proceedings, Mr. Caldwell said, everybody was struck with amazement to learn that the Bill had been thrown out. Well, there was so much dissatisfaction at the result, that the Marquess of Lothian, on being appealed to, at once saw the necessity of having a Commission to inquire into the subject on the spot. It was arranged that the whole expenses of the Commission should be saddled on Glasgow. The Town Clerk of Glasgow gave evidence to the effect that the total expenses occasioned to Glasgow were over £5,600. The expense caused to the suburban burghs must have been of an equal amount. The result was not only to cause this expense, but to engender the bad feeling usually created when the conflicting claims of various districts are asserted. The inquiry was granted for the purpose of doing away with further applications to Parliament for the extension of those boundaries, the Chairman being the predecessor of the present Lord Advocate (Mr. Macdonald). The authorities in Glasgow never had the smallest doubt that they were virtually promised by the then Lord Advocate that a public Bill should be brought in for the purpose of giving effect to the recommendations of that Commission. I asked a number of questions of the Lord Advocate as to when the Bill would be brought in, using language which distinctly implied that a promise had been given—and never once was that promise repudiated. Last year, when the present Lord Advocate had succeeded to his present position, I asked him whether the Government would not bring in a Bill to give effect to the promise of his predecessor, and he answered the question without any repudiation of the promise. Again, on one occasion, the whole of the seven Members for Glasgow waited on the Secretary for Scotland (Lord Lothian) for the purpose of urging him to bring in a Bill to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission, and although all the arguments used were based on the assumption that a pledge had been given, not a single word was said by the noble Lord in repudiation of the existence of such a pledge. This year, when the Scotch Local Government Bill was coming before the House, the crisis became more acute, and it was regarded as a matter of the utmost necessity that these boundary questions should be settled at once and without delay, so as to enable the different Local Authorities concerned to understand their financial position under the new arrangement. Deputations came up, and after trying to get some answer from the Secretary for Scotland, they proceeded to the Prime Minister. The result was that the matter apparently came before the Cabinet. At all events, the authorities in Glasgow received a letter from Lord Salisbury's Secretary stating that the Government had given careful consideration to the proposal that they should introduce a Bill to Parliament relating to the boundaries of Glasgow, but it did not appear to them that sufficient cause had been shown for so great a departure from the ordinary rule by which Bills of this nature were usually governed, and they were unable to accede to the suggestion that it should be introduced as a Government measure instead of a private Bill. The result was that the authorities in Glasgow attempted to bring forward the subject as a private Bill, but they were too late to comply with the Standing Orders, and the Bill was thrown out on the Standing Orders. I am not going to contest the principle that the proper way is to proceed by private Bill in a case of this kind; but if so, why did Lord Lothian grant a Commission? I must say that the citizens of Glasgow have great reason to complain of what has been done. They have done their best to obtain a fulfilment of the promise made on behalf of the Government, and on several occasions their treatment has strongly resembled what is vulgarly known as a snub. On one accasion they applied for an audience of Lord Salisbury, and the only satisfaction they could get from him was the letter I have read. There can be no question that Lord Lothian was mainly responsi-

ble for the issue of the Commission, and that the directions to the Commissioners were issued in his name. I want to know whether he was authorized by the Cabinet to grant that Commission; because if he was, on what ground can the Government now repudiate his action? My colleagues who were present at the interview with Lord Lothian will bear me out that his Lordship offered no word of dissent to the assumption that the Government were pledged to deal with the recommendations of the Commissioners by public Bill. There could have been no object in issuing the Commission if such had not been the intention. There is another ground on which I protest against the action of the Government. What, I ask, is the use of a Secretary for Scotland if he is not allowed to deal with such a question? I do not say that Lord Lothian was right in issuing the Commission, but I say that having done so and saddled Glasgow with the expense, he was morally bound to see that the Government carried out the promise he had given. I asked the Lord Advocate a question which I put on the paper in reference to the "promised legislation," and it was then for the first time that the Lord Advocate said he had found no trace or indication of such a promise having been given. I know that the people of Glasgow have no doubt on this point; they have again and again stated that such a promise was given; and although they may not have proved very wise in this matter, I do not think they are such absolute fools as to have incurred all the expense of this Commission without having the promise of some *quid pro quo* which was to arise out of it. The whole thing lies in a nutshell: the Secretary for Scotland was solely responsible for the issue of the Boundaries Commission which induced the people of Glasgow, under what seemed to be a promise of legislation by means of a public Bill, to share the expense of that Commission with the neighbouring authorities, at a cost to Glasgow of over £5,000, and to the surrounding burghs of at least as great a sum. He allowed the assumption of this promise to remain uncontradicted for over twelve months, but at the end of that time when he is again approached he assumes a sort of *non possumus*, and when an appeal is made to the Prime Minister he informs them by his secretary that although he has put them to this expense and has set neighbours by the ears over the matter, he does not think this is a case for doing what they have all along thought he was going to do; and he tells them to have recourse to a proceeding which they could have thought of for themselves without his advice had the Government refused to issue the Commission at all. The result is all this needless expense and the deferment for two or three years of the settlement of the boundary question, which ought to have been arranged before the passage of the Local Government Bill. I now beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £500 from the salary of the Secretary for Scotland.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Salaries, &c., be reduced by £500, part of the Salary of the Lord Advocate."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): I regret exceedingly that the constituents of the right hon. Gentleman should entertain a feeling of disappointment at the decision come to by the Government. The hon. Gentleman has conceded with great frankness that he does not dispute the propriety of the Government abstaining from initiating legislation in this matter, and that is an important admission. It is unquestionably the case that the question of settling the boundaries as between one Local Authority and another is not a question which is ordinarily taken up by the Government; but the hon. Gentleman complains that false hopes have been aroused in Glasgow to the effect that the Government would undertake this duty. He has not, however, specified when and where or by whom any such promise was made, and in behalf of my noble Friend the Secretary for Scotland and the right hon. and learned gentleman my predecessor, I have to say that neither of those officials made any promise that the Government would introduce legislation on the subject. I think the case of the hon. Gentleman does not consist of explicit statements, but resolves itself into the proposition that the issue of the Commission by the Government must be taken to imply that the Government

intended to propose legislation on the subject. But what are the facts? This question it seems had gone on smouldering in various stages of activity for a long time, and there was a moot point as to whether it would be of advantage to the community around Glasgow that this boundary question should be settled. That question had broken out in various shapes. It was, under these circumstances, strongly put before the Government that it would be desirable to appoint a Commission which would bring the parties together and enable them to come to some agreement as to the proposal for annexation. Had such a result been brought about it would have been productive of great public advantage, and would have placed the matter in a very different position from that which it then held, as one which was in dispute among the different communities. But that hope was disappointed, and it was found that the harmony anticipated did not commend itself to the different parties, on the contrary, there was a considerable protest from dissentients who believed they would suffer from annexation, and the question the Government had to face was whether it was proper to force on that annexation. They decided that it was not. I would point out that Glasgow is in no way damaged by this, nor are her interests affected or prejudiced. On the contrary, the result has been to focus public opinion on the merits of the question, and to bring together accurately and precisely the results of the inquiry. The hon. Gentleman has made further charges against the Government of different kinds. He complains of the conduct of the Government towards the officials of Glasgow. So far as the protest against Lord Salisbury not having given an audience to the Glasgow deputation, the reason was that it was not asked for.

DR. CAMERON: The letter I read was in reply to one asking for an audience.

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I did not so understand it. I need hardly say that with regard to Glasgow there has always been a desire, not merely to show the respect due to that city, but also to show consideration for the large interests of the Glasgow people. I have stated the circumstances under which this Commission was granted. It was for the double purpose of ascertaining the facts, and also, if possible, to promote an agreement. The result of the Commission has been not to retard but to advance the general interests in so far as they can be served by accurate ascertainment of the facts.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the question whether this Commission was granted with the authority of the Government, or whether Lord Lothian appointed this Commission on his own responsibility. If Lord Lothian acted on his own responsibility then I venture to say he was deceiving the people of Glasgow, who believed that this Commission was issued with the full weight and authority of the Government. They believed that this Commission was appointed not merely to ascertain the facts but also with a view to special legislation. But the result has been that Glasgow has not been able to move for the last three years in connection with this boundary question, owing to the promise held out by the Government that they were likely to deal with the subject as a Government measure. Under the Local Government Bill these districts outside Glasgow will be formed, and I want to know how they could afterwards be taken from the County Government and handed to the burgh. If the Government did not mean to legislate, they had no right to appoint a Commission, and I maintain that the fact of their appointing a Commission was an indication that they meant to legislate. Not merely has Glasgow been prejudiced, but it has been put to all the expense. The Lord Advocate said that harmony might possibly be the result of bringing the parties together. But I do not believe that anyone connected with the City of Glasgow had the remotest hope that harmony would be brought about by the Commission. The contention as to these boundaries has continued for years; it was the subject of discussion in Committee upstairs, and there was no prospect of agreement between the parties. The issuing of a Commission of this kind was not a mere Departmental act, but it was an act of such a nature that it required the authority of the Cabinet to deal with it, and Lord Lothian certainly acted in a manner

which justifies the proposed reduction of his salary. Not only has the matter cost Glasgow £5,000, but her position is even worse, because these districts will be dealt with by the Local Government Bill, and I wish to know how you could proceed by Private Bill next year for the purpose of retaking those districts, and remodelling your whole county arrangements? If Lord Lothian had the authority of the Government in appointing the Commission, then the Government ought honourably to carry out the real purpose for which the Commission was appointed. With regard to the audience granted in London last year, it was for the purpose of getting the Government to say whether they were prepared to go on with the Bill. It was not a question of whether or not the Government would introduce a Bill. The only question was whether the Bill was to be introduced by the Government last Session, or whether it would be more prudent to introduce it this Session. From first to last there was no doubt that the Government were going to bring in a Bill, and that they were going to carry out the recommendations of the Commissioners. The Government is certainly placed in a very awkward position with regard to Glasgow. The entire community of Glasgow, irrespective of politics, feel they have been prejudiced. The Local Government Bill is likely to stultify and upset this action in getting the burghs united, and it would be in the interests of Glasgow if this Local Government Bill could be shelved for the present year in order that they might have an opportunity of bringing forward their Boundaries Bill, and pass it before the boundaries could be decided under the Local Government Bill.

DR. CAMERON: The right hon. Gentleman has said that there has been no indication of a promise on the part of the Government that legislation should follow the issue of this Commission. Here are the terms in which his predecessor wrote to Lord Lothian:—

"My Lord, I have to inform you that I have determined to appoint a Commission to inquire and report with reference to future legislation, &c."

What could be more definite than that? When the right hon. Gentleman the Lord Advocate took office, he answered a question of mine on the 13th November last. I asked—

"Whether he proposes before the end of this Session (the Autumn Session) to produce the promised Bill for carrying out the recommendations of the Glasgow Boundaries Commission?"

The Lord Advocate replied:—

"The recommendations of the Commission are still under the consideration of the Government, and I am, therefore, not in a position to give a definite answer to that question."

It is clear that the Government contemplated the introduction of a Bill. It was not a question of whether or not they would introduce it, but whether they would introduce it speedily. If it was not the intention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to introduce a Bill, all I can say is that the language he used in this House in reply to various questions successfully concealed his thoughts. The deputation waited upon the noble Lord for the purpose of urging him to bring in his Bill; but now the Lord Provos of Glasgow is informed by Lord Salisbury's Secretary that it is not a question to be dealt with by a public Bill at all, but a question which should go before a Committee upstairs. Why did not the Government think of that before they issued their Commission and before they put Glasgow to expense? The right hon. Gentleman says that Glasgow has not been damnified. The citizens of Glasgow are deeply damnified by the matter. They have been damnified by the answer of the right hon. Gentleman himself; for, had he told us last year that this subject was a proper matter for decision by a Committee upstairs, then, Sir, Glasgow would at least have been in a position to give the requisite notice required by law, and the scheme would have come before Parliament in the ordinary way. As it is, they have acted in the delusive hope that the Government would carry out its implied promise. I do not know whether it might be possible to get the matter dealt with by a public Bill this year; if so, it would have been desirable that the Government should come to some decision at once.

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I have listened very carefully to the debate, which opens up a question of considerable importance, as to which a few words were dropped by the Lord Advocate, but I do not think that he struck the key-note at all. What I

understood the Lord Advocate to say was that there was no obligation on the part of the Government to bring in a Bill to carry out the recommendations of the Commission. Now, Sir, I think the precedents are all the other way. If an inquiry is conducted by a Commission appointed by the Crown, with power to take evidence—and I am told that this Commission had power to take evidence on oath—it is customary to follow it up by a public Act, and not to leave it to private persons to pursue the matter through the machinery of a private Bill. I do not myself remember any case, during my thirty years' experience of Parliamentary life, of a Commission being appointed with power to take evidence on oath, and of a failure to follow up its recommendations by a public Act. There are a good many instances in which the Government have brought in Bills based on the recommendations of their Commission, and I think we are entitled to a distinct explanation from the Lord Advocate, or some other Member of the Government, as to the precedents, if there are any, for the course pursued.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): I am not sufficiently acquainted with the circumstances of the particular matter under discussion by the Committee to express a definite opinion upon it, but with respect to the question asked by the right hon. Gentleman, I can refer him to a similar case in which a Commission, ten years ago, was appointed to investigate boundaries of certain boroughs in Ireland, and notably of the City of Dublin. It was appointed by the Government and was much of the same character as that to which allusion is now being made. No Government, however, since then has brought in a Bill to carry out the recommendation of that Committee, and therefore the present is not the only case of non-interference on the part of the Government.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I wish to vote for the reduction of the salary of the Secretary for Scotland on broader and wider grounds than those which have been advanced by the preceding speakers, and I must begin by protesting, as I do in the strongest possible terms, that the Scotch Members are being infamously used in the way in which Scotch Estimates are being forced on during the afternoon of the last day before the recess, when a great majority of the Scotch Members are absent from town, and the few who do remain are being coerced into rushing Votes through without proper discussion, because unless they consent to do that they will have to bear the odium of depriving the House of a considerable prolongation of the holidays. I think we have been very badly treated in this way, and, in regard to the particular Vote under discussion, I think it is most unbecoming that an attempt should be made to rush it through. Remember that the administration of Scotland is in a kind of transition state. You have a Secretary for Scotland, but the machinery of administration has not been adapted to the new state of things. We have still a responsible Board in Edinburgh who are not represented in Parliament, and I think it would be a good thing to get rid of this Board, and have them concentrated in the Office of Secretary for Scotland. It is impossible to discuss this question in the absence of the great majority of Scotch Members. I want to know why we are treated differently to the Irish Members. The Government tell the Irish Members that their convenience shall be consulted, that on no account shall Irish Votes be taken either immediately before or immediately after the holidays. I am afraid that we shall have to show our teeth and make ourselves disagreeable, for it is because the Irish Members have always been ready to cause the Government inconvenience that they are now treated with the utmost civility. In the presence of the First Lord of the Treasury I repeat that we have been very badly treated in this respect, and as regards the Vote of the Secretary for Scotland I assert that our machinery requires revision. We have three highly paid officers, the Secretary for Scotland, the permanent Under Secretary, and the assistant Under Secretary, all having high salaries, and we have six clerks under them. I could never make out what work is done in the Scotch Office at Dover House. Whenever I go there the officials tell me that they are overwhelmed with work, but my constituents can never find out that they are in contact with the rest of the world. I believe the truth is that you have too much head and too little tail in that department, with the result

that highly paid officers are doing petty clerks' works. Now another ground on which I shall vote for the reduction of this salary is that the Secretary for Scotland ought to have a seat in this House. Once or twice, at long intervals, we have had a Scotch Secretary in the House of Commons, but it is the practice to fill the post with a Peer; and although the present Secretary for Scotland is no doubt well versed in the affairs of Scotland, I hope the time may not be long distant when the Upper House of Parliament will cease to exist, and I shall be delighted then to see the present Secretary for Scotland on the Front Bench opposite, should the Conservative Party at that time be in power. I think it a matter of vital importance that the Secretary for Scotland should have a seat in this House.

MR. CALDWELL: I wish to press for an answer from the Government to my question: Was it, or was it not, with the consent of the Government that Lord Lothian issued his Commission? This question is one of far more importance than the Government imagine, because when the census takes place it will be found that the City of Glasgow, instead of coming out as the second city of the Empire, as it ought, and as it would do if this Boundaries Bill were carried, will occupy a very different position. It is all very well for the Government to treat this matter lightly in this House. It is not treated lightly in the City of Glasgow, and I do not think the Government will find that they can afford to put it aside. I again ask, did the Lord Advocate have the authority of the Government in appointing that Committee?

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 64; Noes, 155.—(Div. List, No. 138.)

Original Question again proposed.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): Before this Vote is taken, I should like to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, or in his absence, the First Lord of the Treasury, how it is that the senior clerk in the Scotch Office at Dover House is only paid a salary beginning at £450, and rising by an annual increment of £20 to £600 per annum, when the senior clerks in all the other Government Departments begin with a salary of £700, which rises up to £800? Why are the Scotch senior clerks paid less than senior clerks in the other Departments?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not in a position to give the hon. Gentleman the information he desires. It is the duty of the Government to see that their officials are amply paid for the duties which they perform, and I have every reason to believe that the salaries fixed for the Scotch Department are fixed with due regard to the capacities of the officers and the ability they have with which to discharge their duties.

Question put, and agreed to.

3. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £4,726, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer in Exchequer, Scotland, of certain Officers in Scotland, and other Charges formerly on the Hereditary Revenue."

DR. CLARK: On this point I want to ask the First Lord of the Treasury for information about the Bible Board. I understand that there has been a Departmental inquiry in this matter, and I wish to know whether any new departure has been carried out, and if it is to be permanent?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: This is another Vote which illustrates the inconvenience of taking Scotch business in the absence of Scotch Members. I know there are several matters on which many of my hon. Friends desire information, especially in regard to this Bible Board, and also as to the salary of the Queen's Commissioner, who gets paid a salary, but does not produce any paintings for money. I will therefore move the reduction of the Vote by £500.

Motion made, and Question, "That a sum, not exceeding £4,226, be granted for the said Service," put, and negatived.—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

Original Question again proposed.

A LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. MAXWELL, Wigton): The Treasury have been in constant communication with the office in Edinburgh on the subject referred to by the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark) and since this Vote was under discussion before, I myself have written several

letters urging that a speedy decision may be come to. I hope in a very short time a decision will be arrived at.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: No doubt we shall be obliged to deal with this question on Report again, but I would ask the hon. Gentleman to tell us what the £20 for the Queen's Plate is for?

SIR H. MAXWELL: It is a recognition of, and I suppose an encouragement to, the ancient and honourable body of Archers.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Is it a plate for which they shoot, and do they actually practice with bows and arrows?

SIR H. MAXWELL: I have never seen the plate, but I believe the hon. Gentleman has correctly described it.

Question put, and agreed to.

4. £4,036, to complete the sum for Lunacy Commission, Scotland.

DR. CLARK: Perhaps the Government will tell us why the Scotch Lunacy Commissioners, who are better known as authorities on the subject of lunacy than the half-dozen men who do the work in England, are paid only £*1,000 a year, which is 50 per cent less than is given in England?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): That question was raised last year on a somewhat kindred subject, and I am not prepared to admit that we are paying in Scotland less than we ought to pay. It may be that we are paying too much in England, and I think the question ought to be examined rather from that point of view than from the point of view suggested by the hon. Member.

Vote agreed to.

5. £4,497, to complete the sum for Registrar General's Office, Scotland.

DR. CLARK: The whole of the charge of registration in Scotland is defrayed by the people, whereas in England a portion of it is paid by this House. I think that is a question which the Government should consider, so as to obtain uniformity, and have all the charges defrayed locally, and not partly by Votes from Parliament and partly by local charges.

Vote agreed to.

6. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £25,464, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Board of Supervision for Relief of the Poor, and for Expenses under the Public Health and Vaccination Acts, including certain grants in aid of local taxation in Scotland."

DR. CAMERON): While I am willing to allow these Votes to pass without repeating the usual objections year by year, I think we must enter a strong protest against this one. At the present moment the Board of Supervision is about to be invested with the most extraordinary and wide reaching new powers. It is to have a very large share in framing the scheme of Local Government in Scotland. I protest against anything of the sort. The Board of Supervision is a body altogether out of accord with our notions of what a Board should be. It is not elected. It consists of a paid chairman, and seven sheriffs who are members *ex officio*, but whose duty consists in advising the Board and Parochial Authorities on disputed points of parochial law, and two more *ex officio* Members,—namely, the Lord Provosts of Edinburgh and Glasgow,—most amiable and estimable gentlemen generally, but having no special knowledge as Poor Law officers. Why, then, they should have been appointed *ex officio* members of the Board, it is very difficult to imagine. Well, Sir, to a body thus constituted it is proposed to give all sorts of duties under the new Local Government Bill. If I remember aright they are to regulate the number of Councillors to be appointed in certain instances; they are to settle questions of boundary, and they are to frame to a large extent this scheme of Local Government. Under these circumstances it becomes imperative for us to protest against their continuance, and not to allow this Vote to pass in silence, in case we might be thought in any degree to concur in the fitness of this body for the duties to be imposed upon it. It has none of the powers or responsibilities or functions of the Local Government Board. The Local Government Board is a Ministry of Health. It is represented by an important Member of the Government who is very generally in the Cabinet. It is directly responsible to the House for all its actions, but the Board of Supervision of Scotland is a hole-and-corner affair, consisting of paid

officials and irresponsible. I believe the Solicitor General for Scotland is one of the *ex officio* members of the Board. On a former occasion I challenged the Lord Advocate as to whether, when he was Solicitor General, he was ever present at the Board's deliberations, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman was obliged to confess that he had not been so present, or at least he had been present at remarkably few meetings.

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: When I was Solicitor General I attended a sufficient number of meetings.

DR. CAMERON: In order to qualify, I suppose, for the salary which Parliament is asked to vote. But as a matter of fact the right hon. and learned Gentleman did tell us that important business is transacted without meetings being regularly called.

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: What I said was that I had, while I was Solicitor General, attended some meetings, but that when questions of law arose involving matters of general importance, papers were sometimes sent to me for my opinion. The hon. Gentleman is mistaken in saying that any important business is done otherwise than at meetings; but it is true that the legal members of the Board have, upon questions of law, papers sent regularly to them in order that they may give their opinions.

DR. CAMERON: That is so; otherwise why should we be asked to vote money for these gentlemen? But matters are disposed of without formal summonses to attend meetings being sent to all the members of the Board. I know that on one occasion, when some relief scheme was to be discussed, the Provost of Glasgow attended a meeting of the Board, and that that was the first meeting he had attended, although he had been long in office. I maintain that the Board of Supervision, constituted as it is, is an absolute anachronism, and that to entrust to that Board as is proposed under the Local Government scheme ——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is entitled to discuss the constitution of the Board which is discharging the functions for which money is voted, but he is not entitled to discuss the Local Government Bill.

DR. CAMERON: What I contend is that the work discharged by the Board of Supervision might be infinitely better discharged by a Department of the Scotch Office. On that ground I beg to move the reduction of the Vote which stands in my name.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Salaries, &c., be reduced by £5,000."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I entirely agree with my hon. Friend. I believe there is no Vote amongst all the Votes presented to the House which requires more thorough discussion than this Vote. The Board of Supervision is an anachronism which the people of Scotland want to get rid of. The majority of the Scotch Members are absent, and we are obliged to pass these Votes. We can do nothing more than protest. I believe that all that has been said by my hon. Friend with regard to the constitution and functions of the Board of Supervision, and as to the feelings of the people of Scotland with regard to the Board, is perfectly correct. The functions of the present Board are functions which do not give satisfaction to the people of Scotland, and therefore I heartily join in the protest my hon. Friend has made.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland): I also beg to join in the protest which has been made in regard to the Board of Supervision. It is truly an anachronism that a Board which possesses such powers as the Board of Supervision should be composed as this Board is. I do not know what qualifications Sheriffs have for the discharge of duties of the kind entrusted to them, but I think it improper that Sheriffs and Lord Provosts of cities should, in virtue of their positions, have seats on the Board of Supervision. I desire to point out that Mr. MacNeil, an official of the Board, seems to have had plenty of time to go over to Canada in the interest of private landowners and Canadian land companies, and to lay before the people of the Highlands schemes for the pecuniary benefit of the landowners. It must have occurred to others, as well as to myself, that a gentleman who can devote himself to private enterprises can very well have his services as an official of the Board of Supervision dispensed with.

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: With regard to Mr. MacNeil, it is fair to say he went on the errand referred to at the

express wish of the Secretary for Scotland. He did not go to promote the interests of any land company, but to carry out a scheme of emigration conducted by the Government. Mr. MacNeil is a very valuable public servant, and certainly no suggestion can with justice be made that he left his public duty in order to assist in business with which he had no official connection. Now, I hope the hon. Member for the College Division (Dr. Cameron) will excuse me if I do not follow him in what he has said as to the Board of Supervision. I know he entertains strong opinions on the subject, but I think he will admit the accuracy of my statement when I say that all the points he has raised to-day he raised last December. The present constitution of the Board of Supervision certainly conduces to economy, inasmuch as for a slight addition to their salaries the services of the Sheriffs are obtained on matters in which they are well qualified to act. The Board of Supervision has had accumulated upon itself duties relating to the administration of the poor and the public health, and it has discharged its functions with discrimination and efficiency.

DR. CLARK: Of all the Boards in Scotland, the Board of Supervision is the worst. The members are a bad lot: they are irresponsible, and whenever we get Home Rule we will soon sweep them away, if this House does not do so before. It is as to the administration of the Public Health Act that I desire to say a word. Our Public Health Act in Scotland is very far behindhand, and our methods of carrying it out are also far behind. The expenses of the Board of Supervision are very reasonable; the salaries are very low—so low, in fact, that I think efficiency suffers. The Board is entrusted with the carrying out of the Public Health Act, and the entire money expended by them in causing inquiries to be made under that Act, and in paying their medical attendant, is £200, and for vaccination and all other similar services only £500 is spent. In England upon the same services there is spent £17,704. Instead of £400 in salaries, as in Scotland, £9,200 is spent here. In Ireland £5,360 is spent in salaries and expenses. I believe there are thousands of preventable deaths in consequence of the neglect in Scotland, and yet we cannot get from the Government a proper Public Health Act. Year after year we have tried to do so, but there has not been time for it to pass.

DR. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty): I certainly think that if we are to get Local Government in Scotland, it is our duty to insist upon such a Local Government Board for Scotland as exists in England.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 57; Noes 162. (Division List, No. 139.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

7. £38,630, to complete the sum for Privy Council Office.

MR. HERBERT GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): There is just one question I wish to ask in relation to this Vote, and which, I think, the Vice Chamberlain can answer. It will be remembered that last year we voted £5,000 for agricultural and dairy schools, and I should like to know how this sum has been allocated among the various agricultural districts in the country. I need not remind my noble Friend that this is a question of some interest to those who represent agricultural constituencies or are concerned in agricultural matters. When the question of this grant was before the House we were given to understand that this sum of £5,000 would not be the final amount the Government would demand for the purpose. If I remember rightly, the First Lord of the Treasury said distinctly, in replying to a question, that £5,000 did not represent the final sum the Government might think it necessary to ask for, and the President of the Council in another place said that this sum would be expended really in obtaining information as to the real needs of the country, and upon this information the Agricultural Department would take further action. I simply ask now how the money has been expended in the past year, and whether the Department are likely to recommend that the House should vote any further amount of money in this direction, whether they have discovered in allocating the sum granted whether the plan of so aiding Dairy Schools is one to be encouraged or otherwise. It is important we should have this information. Some of us take the deepest interest in Dairy Schools; and others

have suspended their judgment in regard to the matter. An authoritative statement from the noble Lord may influence these last and assist in the formation of an opinion on the subject.

THE VICE-CHAMBERLAIN (Viscount LEWISHAM, Lewisham): When it became known that the sum of £5,000 was to be granted, we had, as may well be understood, many applications from various parts of the country. The form of procedure adopted by the Privy Council was as follows:—Three temporary Inspectors were appointed, two for England and Wales, and one for Scotland, and as applications for assistance were received, one of these Inspectors was sent to the locality to conduct a personal investigation into all the circumstances. The Inspector prepared his Report, and this Report was submitted to the Agricultural Committee of the Council, which from time to time sat to consider these Reports, and whether any grant should be made and to what amount. Of the total sum voted, only £3,423 have been expended, but there is an additional sum of £5,000 asked for again this year, though of course the Privy Council knew nothing of this in the first instance. Without attempting to enumerate the places to which grants have been made, I may say that the grants have been pretty generally scattered throughout the country, in England, Scotland, and Wales.

MR. H. GARDNER: I do not gather whether the Government intend to ask for any further sum beyond £5,000.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM: Not for this year.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I would ask the First Lord whether it is not expedient now to report Progress, seeing the amount and importance of the present Vote, upon which many matters may properly arise. The Scotch Votes have been disposed of in a very short space of time under circumstances to which I need not allude, and there is but a short interval left before the suspension of the sitting.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am obliged to the hon. and learned Gentleman for the suggestion, but I would remind him that the understanding was that the whole of Class 2 should be disposed of with the exception of the Vote for the Scotch Fishery Board, and I must ask the Committee to carry out this undertaking. I am not aware of any important question likely to arise in connection with the present Vote which should prevent us from going on with it. I think the Committee will agree that it is desirable the Vote should be taken. If there is any important matter in relation to administration that hon. Members desire to raise and do not find the opportunity on this Vote, I will go so far as to say that I will endeavour to secure them an opportunity in the discussion upon the Agricultural Department Bill.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: I do not admit there was anything like the agreement mentioned arrived at; but, however, if we take the Vote now, the right hon. Gentleman must not be surprised if we seek an opportunity of raising questions in which we are interested upon the Report stage.

*DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I will not detain the Committee at length with a subject I desire to raise upon this Vote. I have put down a notice for the reduction of the Vote in order to raise one or two points in relation to the administration of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act; and I will carry out my intention rather in the shape of putting queries than in making a formal speech. I will ask the noble Lord if anything has been done to carry out the recommendation of the Departmental Committee by placing the disease of tuberculosis among those in respect of which cattle are required to be slaughtered. This is a disease which, as evidence has shown, can not only be communicated from one animal to another, but from animals to mankind. I lay stress on the point, having in view the fact that evidence is not wanting to show that tuberculosis has been communicated to young children through milk from cows affected with this disease. That there is a considerable increase in acute tuberculosis among young children is admitted, and this, I think, is due to the fact of their being fed on milk from tuberculous cows, and this grows more alarming day by day as the season advances. I ask, therefore, is the Department going to carry out the recommendation of the Committee, and include this disease among those for what animals are slaughtered? Then, we have lost large sums in Scotland from

the disease of pleuro-pneumonia. I am quite of opinion that in our present state of knowledge of this disease, the only remedy is the pole-axe—is to kill it out; but alongside this summary method we ought to carry out some scientific system of investigation for the collection of certain data in relation of the disease, its causes, period of incubation, and development. I noticed in an Aberdeen paper, recently, an account of an interesting series of experiments carried out in South America by a Commission appointed to investigate the subject. This Commission carried out a large number of experiments in inoculation, and came to the conclusion that in inoculation, carried out on the Pasteur system, there might be found a remedy for this, as yet, incurable disease. I will not detain the Committee by going further into the subject. I will only put this other question to my noble Friend, can he hold out any hope that the Government will give any encouragement, pecuniary or otherwise—pecuniary is preferable—to experiments for the purpose of discovering a remedy for this intricate, and, at the same time, dangerous disease, from which we in Scotland lose an enormous amount of money from time to time?

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM: I will convey the request of the hon. Member to the other Members of the Privy Council, but I may point out that dealing with tuberculosis is surrounded by all sorts of difficulties. As the hon. Member is, no doubt, well aware, chickens are a source from which the disease is carried as frequently as any other. As regards pleuro-pneumonia, the decision arrived at, so far as my recollection goes, by the Committee on the subject was, that there are three ways by which the disease may be dealt with—by isolation, inoculation and extirpation; and though inoculation has been found a great assistance, it has been found impossible to stamp out the disease by inoculation alone.

*DR. FARQUHARSON: The noble Lord is speaking of pleuro-pneumonia?

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM: Yes.

*DR. FARQUHARSON: But chickens do not have pleuro-pneumonia.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM: No; nor did I say they do have the disease. The first of my remarks referred to the hon. Member's observations on tuberculosis.

*DR. FARQUHARSON: Children in arms are not in the habit of consuming many chickens; it is the milk from tuberculous cows that does the mischief.

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I am not going to raise any formal objection; but as we may be going to set a precedent for the conduct of business, it is well to observe that on the Order Book for to-day Vote 7 in Class 2 does not appear among business to be taken. On the contrary, in the Order Book for future days there are two Amendments down to the Vote, and this is an intimation to the House that Vote 7 in Class 2 is not intended to be taken to-day. If hon. Members will refer to the Orders, they will see that I am not misstating the position, and that it is a clear intimation that the Vote is not to be taken. We are now on Vote 7, and it is intended by the Government to proceed with it on the assumption that the words "the remaining Votes in Class 2" include a previous and postponed Vote. As I have said, I am not making a formal objection, but it is quite necessary that it should be clearly understood that we are not setting a precedent, and it would be well if the First Lord should give a distinct declaration to that effect; otherwise, in proceeding counter to the intimation conveyed by the Order Book, we may be setting an example that on some future occasion may be followed and attended by serious objection.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I entirely agree with the observations of the right hon. Gentleman. I am not responsible for the bringing forward of the notices on the Paper, but I accept fully the right hon. Gentleman's view of the situation, and if any hon. Member feels there is any substantial objection to the Vote being taken now, I will not go on with it. Certainly, it was my understanding to include this Vote in the remaining Votes of Class 2 which were to be taken to-day, and I think this particular Vote was postponed at the request of hon. Gentlemen opposite until after the Second Reading of the Agricultural Board Bill, and, having carried out that undertaking, I did not think there was any substantial objection to taking the Vote now.

*MR. CHILDERS: I expressly said that I took no formal objection.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): As a question of order that might be important at another time, as these notices

appear on the Order Book among those Notices of Motion for which no days are fixed, and as they concern this Vote, is it competent for the Committee to take this Vote now?

THE CHAIRMAN: No doubt it is competent for the Committee to take the Vote as included in the business to be taken technically; still, if any hon. Member objects, certainly the Vote ought not to be taken.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday, June 17.

Committee to sit again upon Monday, June 17.

THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I wish now to move "That the House at its rising do adjourn till Monday, the 17th of June." This date has been arrived at after some hesitation. At the same time, I wish to thank hon. Members on both sides of the House for the consideration they have shown to public business for the last two days, which makes it possible to propose a longer adjournment than I thought it right, under the circumstances, to have a few days ago.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the House at its rising this day do adjourn to Monday, June 17."

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I think the House may congratulate Her Majesty's Government both on the progress made in the last day or two with business, and upon the decision arrived at to extend the holidays. But I rise to ask the right hon. Gentleman to be good enough to tell us what the business will be on Monday the 17th, and for the Morning Sitting on Tuesday. It is necessary to have this information, because notices will have to be given to-day.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I intended to rise immediately after the Adjournment Motion was carried, but I may as well state now what we purpose. On Monday and Tuesday we propose to take the Army and Navy Estimates, and on Thursday the Scotch Universities Bill. I think this will be convenient to the House, and I hope we shall get the Second Reading of that Bill. Immediately after the House meets again I shall move that Government Orders of the Day and Notices of Motions shall take precedence of all other business on Tuesdays. I think the House will not be indisposed to yield us this.

*MR. CHILDERS: Reverting to three o'clock sittings?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I wish with regard to that question to suit the convenience of the House. The usual course is to revert to three o'clock sittings, but if hon. Members prefer a Morning Sitting the Government will raise no difficulties. The usual course is undoubtedly to revert to the three o'clock sittings.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): In relation to this point, I would ask the Government to consider how it affects the sittings of Committees. The two o'clock sittings are very inconvenient for Members serving on Committees, and there are some important Committees will be sitting on Tuesdays and Fridays for the remainder of the Session. I wish to add another word or two by way of justification of the House before the public. It has been stated in the public Press within the last few days that Supply has never been in such a state of arrear as it is in at the present time. I am not going for a moment to say that we have made any rapid progress with Supply. I am well aware that a large amount of time has been devoted to Supply in this as compared with previous Sessions, and this raises a question which the House will some day have to consider in connection with Supply. But what I now wish to point out is that, whereas on July 9, 1888, Classes 1 and 2 of the Civil Service Votes, there were remaining 33 Votes undisposed of, we have this year on June 4 only nine Votes remaining to be taken in Classes 1 and 2, and we have also disposed of the Telegraphic Vote. Therefore, I think it is not fair after the tribute of praise we have had from the Leader of the House for our critics in the public Press, who are always finding fault with the House of Commons, and especially with the Opposition, to say that public business is in a state of arrear this year as compared with former years. Public business is more advanced before Whitsuntide this year than for many years past, so far as Supply is concerned.

*Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I take the opportunity offered by this motion of asking the President of the Board of Trade, whether he can see his way to reconsider his decision as to legislation which was practically promised last year, for the promotion of public safety in connection with railways. I heartily approve of taking Supply early in the Session, and I think the state of business would justify the right hon. Gentleman in dealing with the question this Session. It seemed to me last year when this question was discussed, there were very few points of difference between those I have the honour to represent in this matter and the Board of Trade. I wish to acknowledge most cordially the great efforts made by the President of the Board of Trade during the last three years to clear off arrears of legislation in relation to his Department. When at the close of the Session we reckon up the Departmental Bills the right hon. Gentleman has succeeded in passing, I do not think any Department will be able to show a better record. But while making this acknowledgment, I must really complain that legislation to which I am referring did not have a foremost place in the right hon. Gentleman's programme, legislation that is imperatively demanded by all the railway *employés* in the country, and which, it can be proved to demonstration from the official documents of the Board of Trade, would in all human probability result in a sensible diminution of the still terrible list of deaths and injuries. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman should have given precedence to such Bills as the Merchant Shipping Tonnage Bill, the Merchant Colours Bill, and others. We are not asking, as the right hon. Gentleman very well knows, that the Board of Trade should take upon itself the duties of railway management. In urging that the Board of Trade should take power to enforce its recommendations, I shall not be met by that antiquated argument. It is about as rational as to say that Local Authorities turn themselves into architects and builders when they insist on certain standards of sanitation. Again and again, when I and others have called attention to the causes of serious accidents, the right hon. Gentleman is forced to admit the Board of Trade has no power to remove them. The Returns of the past year add many reasons for the passing of such a measure. Again and again has the Department pointed out to the Directors of Scotch lines the serious risks of marshalling mixed trains with goods vans and waggons in front of passenger carriages, but the warnings were disregarded, and we had an accident on the Highland line that might have been attended with serious loss of life, but happily the saloon and other carriages which were dashed down an embankment were empty. Then there is the question of communication between passengers and drivers and guards. The opinion of the Board is that means of communication should be made compulsory with regard to all trains, not limiting it to trains that proceed 20 miles without stopping. There was an instance on the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire line, where an accident at Hyde Junction, accompanied by serious loss of life and injury, would, in all human probability, have been prevented had there been communication between passengers and driver. There was no point last year to which the right hon. Gentleman agreed more fully than as to level crossings, and when I recently put a question as to two cases that I have frequently brought before this House, he must have been dissatisfied at having to reply that he still had no power. One was the typical case of Todmorden Junction on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. The Board of Trade and the Local Board of Todmorden have for years pressed on the Directors the necessity of erecting a bridge or constructing a subway to communicate between platforms at a junction where three thousand passengers interchange daily. So also at the Milford Haven Station of the Great Western Railway, where there has been loss of life, the railway company will not erect a bridge for the protection of their servants and of the public. In this case the conduct of the railway company seems to me to be a disgraceful instance of the misuse of a monopoly, for they are using their power and the knowledge of the danger for the purpose of extorting from the inhabitants a contribution towards the building of a bridge which in ordinary consideration

for the protection of life the company ought to have constructed long ago themselves. I do not wish to detain the House beyond establishing the importance of the subject I am raising. I may say that I speak on behalf of the great body of railway servants in the country, and the right hon. Gentleman will bear me out when I say that it is not quite my fault that I had not a previous opportunity of bringing this subject before the House. There are many matters I might touch on as showing the necessity for extending the powers of the Board of Trade. There is the question of couplings. The Return which the right hon. Gentleman promised last year cannot be completed from the fact that nearly half the wagons used on railways are the property of private owners, and are not registered or under the control of the Board or of the companies, and it is impossible to obtain the facts in regard to them. That in itself is a serious danger. In regard to overtime work, there we now, in Lord De La Warr's Returns, ample material to deal with that question. In the early part of this year we had a case of revolting cruelty, the death of a miserable fog man from this overtime work. I would suggest that if the right hon. Gentleman contemplates legislation on the point, he should approach it from the same point of view as the law regarding the undermanning of a ship. The Secretary to the Board of Trade very properly replied to the railway company, when they made the excuse that they had not a sufficient number of trained fogmen, it is the duty of the company to provide a sufficient number of men for the purpose. The Board of Trade might compel additions to the staff, where in the view of the Inspector such additions are necessary for safety. I owe an apology to the House for detaining it so long, but I must plead the importance of the subject to many thousand railway servants who have a right to be heard on a matter in which the safety of their lives is concerned. Many petitions have been presented to the House on the subject, and I am sure Members on both sides are anxious to give fair consideration to the claims of a body of men who give to their work a high degree of intelligence and a still higher degree of loyalty to duty, men to whose hardships and patient endurance we have again and again owed our protection from the gravest dangers. I gladly recognize the good legislative work for which the President of the Board of Trade has this Session been conspicuous, and if he can add to that work the carrying through of a Bill for the better regulation of railways, he will accomplish a work that will be the means of saving many lives, give general satisfaction, and I think I may add he will not meet with opposition from any section of the House.

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH: I have no right to complain that the hon. Member has taken the opportunity of bringing this matter forward nor of his manner of doing so. He was prevented by an accident for which nobody is responsible from calling attention to the subject on a previous occasion. If I decline to enter into the matters he has raised it is not from any disrespect to him or want of appreciation of the importance of the subject, but simply beceuse I have very little to say in regard to it. I am not quite, I think, in agreement with the view expressed by the hon. Member as to the increase of danger to railway servants and the travelling public, and the degree to which legislation would remove it. I think that the record for 1888 will show a decided improvement in the number of accidents, and I very much doubt whether such accidents as did occur could have been obviated by anything Parliament could do as the hon Member anticipates. A very strong force of public opinion is now brought to bear upon railway authorities through the agency of this House, the Press, and the Board of Trade, and it is to that public opinion that I rather trust for the removal of evils. With regard to overtime, I am inclined to think that remedial legislation is not possible, and that publicity alone can effect the cure of any evils that exist. With reference to other matters, however, I admit that it would be possible to alter and improve the law, and if there were any reasonable chance of a measure being adequateiy discussed at this period of the Session I should certainly produce one. But, having regard to what has passed this Session and to what is yet to come, I could not hold out any hope that I shall be able to deal with

the subject this year. I have not overlooked it, however, and I have a measure on the stocks which I hope to make public in one way or another, either during the present Session or during the autumn, so that the principles of the Bill may receive that criticism and discussion which ought to be bestowed upon them by the railway authorities, the railway servants and the public. In this way I hope to put the question in a shape in which it will be ripe for legislation next year.

*Mr. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire): Before the question is put I desire again to ask the Government even now at this late hour, to reconsider their position in regard to the Commission on the Welsh Sunday Closing Act, which position has given rise to the greatest dissatisfaction throughout the Principality. Let it be clearly understood that neither I or the Welsh people desire to make any complaint as to the personal qualifications of any of the distinguished gentlemen who have been appointed to the Commission. But it is of the utmost importance not only that the Commission should act impartially in this matter, but that they should have the confidence of the people. It is with great regret that the Welsh people find that no one conversant with the Welsh language has been appointed on the Commission. It is true the Secretary speaks Welsh, but that is only an admission that a knowledge of the language is desirable, and there is an earnest desire that there should be a knowledge of the language upon the Commission itself. Another grievance is that, although Nonconformists predominate so largely in Wales, not a single Nonconformist is to be found among the Commissioners. Among the Commissioners is a gentleman of high position and character in the person of Lord Emlyn, but at the same time it must be remembered that when he sat in this House he was one of the two Welsh Members who voted against the Welsh Sunday Closing Bill and I think he expressed his opinion by speech against the measure. Lord Emlyn not re-elected; his views are not in was harmony with the Nonconformists, who form the great majority of his former constituents, and we know how continued opposition hardens and crystalizes opposing sentiments. There is great doubt whether Lord Emlyn is a Commissioner in whom the Welsh people have confidence for the impartial consideration of this matter. I need not go through the list of Commissioners, but I may say that I do not know that they possess special qualifications unless ignorance of the Welsh language is a qualification. With one of them, Mr. Horatio Lloyd, I have the honour of personal acquaintance, and for him personally I have the greatest respect. His selection as a Commissioner is, however, unfortunate on another ground, for he has indulged in sweeping assertions as to what he believes to be a vicious characteristic of the Welsh people. I again urge upon the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary the desirability of adding to the Commission two gentlemen possessing the qualifications I have referred to. It is matter of deep regret that we have not the services of Lord Herschell on the Commission. It was after consultation between Members of both sides representing Welsh constituencies, that the unanimous desire was evinced that Lord Herschell should be asked to serve as Chairman, and I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that when a Member from either side waited upon him in relation to the matter, it was merely to urge this modest request, and certainly with no intention of infringing, as he seems to suppose, the high prerogative of his office. Perhaps I may take this opportunity of asking if Lord Herschell had accepted the Chairmanship of the Vaccination Commission at the time when the deputation waited upon the right hon. Gentleman? If he had not then, I cannot understand why the right hon. Gentleman should ignore the suggestion pressed upon him by the united Welsh representatives.

*Mr. T. ELLIS (Merionethshire): I wish to endorse the complaint of my hon. Friend. The circumstances attending the appointment of this Commission made it specially necessary to take care to constitute a Commission acceptable to the general body of the Welsh people. The Act was attacked in a series of anonymous articles in a Tory paper in Cardiff. Wales and its representatives cared little for the attacks of a paper which habitually attacks Welsh institutions. The request for a Royal Commission came not from Wales, but

from the Tory Member for a Lancashire Borough who owns the paper which made the attacks on the Welsh Sunday Closing Act. This request was forthwith granted. The requests of Welsh Members to the Government are, as a rule, refused, while the request of a Tory Member on a subject relating to Wales is granted immediately, although he has no connection with Wales except such as he derives from the ownership of a Tory newspaper published in the Principality. In appointing a Commission that the Welsh people did not ask for or want, it was incumbent on the right hon. Gentleman to appoint one that was, at any rate fair and reasonable, and which would command the assent, respect, and confidence of the Principality. But what did he do? He appointed one Gentleman connected as a landlord with Wales—not a Welshman himself, but once a representative of a Welsh constituency in this House. This Gentleman was the only Welsh Member who opposed the Sunday Closing Act; and his own county, part of which he owns, marked its sense of his conduct by rejecting his candidature on the earliest possible opportunity. Who are the other four Commissioners? One of them is an old Member of this House, who was defeated by the hon. Gentleman who asked for this Commission, and to whom the Government so willingly granted the inquiry. This Gentleman was, I suppose, put on the Commission as a sort of consolation for defeat. He is the only Member of the Commission known to have any sympathy with the political and religious views of the vast majority of the Welsh people. The other three Members of the Commission, though the Home Secretary says they have not publicly expressed their views on the Sunday Closing question, are known in Wales as strong and in some cases bitter opponents of the views of the majority of the Welsh people. One of them is a County Court Judge figuring largely in Unionist circles at Chester, and another is a Chairman of Quarter Sessions in a neighbouring Tory county. If the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had gone into the highways and wherever he could in England and Scotland, he could not have found four public men more objectionable to the Welsh people than four of the persons he has appointed. It seems to me that the right hon. Gentleman could very easily have found County Court Judges in Wales who would command the respect of the Welsh people of all shades of political and religious opinion. Would the right hon. Gentleman like the question of the Union between England and Ireland, or the question of the existence of the House of Lords, to be entrusted to a Commission composed of advanced Radicals hostile to those institutions, and including Mr. Davitt and the hon. Member for Cork? In the opinion of the Welsh people this Commission is composed in much the same way. Though I do not suppose we shall make any impression on the Government on this occasion, I am glad my hon. and learned Friend has taken the opportunity of giving expression to the deep and bitter dissatisfaction felt by the Welsh people with the constitution of this Commission.

*MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham): The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken has made several allusions to me which were rather uncalled for. He has attributed this Commission to my interference. It is quite true that I asked a question on this subject, but I had absolutely no communication with Ministers before putting the question, and I think I shall be borne out in that by the Home Secretary when he addresses the House. The hon. Gentleman has said that a number of articles have appeared in a paper of which I am part proprietor attacking Sunday Closing in Wales. That is perfectly true, but those articles were not written from a partizan point of view, but were the reports of a Commissioner appointed to find out the facts in regard to the actual working of the Act. My sole reason for interfering was not simply that these articles had appeared in the newspaper with which I am connected, but it was based on the fact that these articles made such an impression upon disinterested men in Wales that Lord Aberdare said that they convinced him the Act ought to be repealed, and that if a Bill for that purpose were brought in he could not vote against it. A similar effect was produced upon Mr. Justice Grantham and others. I knew that the Welsh Members would never draw attention to these articles, and I

therefore put the question on the Paper, which drew from the Home Secretary the announcement that this Commission would be appointed. It is perfectly true that Mr. Hibbert, who was once my opponent at Oldham, is on the Commission, but he is an honourable man—one of the stamp who, when appointed on such a Commission, forget their politics, and try to do what is fair and right. I wish that Welsh Members on the other side would occasionally act in the same spirit. It is not for me to defend the composition of the Commission, but it seems as if nothing would content the two hon. Members who have spoken but a Commission composed entirely of Welsh dissenting ministers.

MR. MATTHEWS: The observations of the hon. Member for Merionethshire leave the matter in a very peculiar position. While the two Welsh Members have declared that the people of Wales do not care for this Commission, they have occupied the time of the House of Commons with questions as to who the Chairman of the Commission is to be. I have been blamed because Lord Herschell was not appointed Chairman of the Commission, but I am not aware that the noble Lord, for whom I have the highest respect, speaks Welsh; and he therefore failed in what hon. Members opposite consider an essential accomplishment. I take the blame upon myself for not attaching to the representations made to me with regard to Lord Herschell that grave significance which I now understand is attached to it. I should have had the greatest pleasure in appointing Lord Herschell, but the President of the Local Government Board, who was perhaps more wide awake, secured him for another Commission before I could make the application, and Lord Herschell could not sit on two Commissions at once. I spent two weeks of intense mental anguish in trying to discover five men who were not committed on this Sunday Closing Question, but unfortunately the noise of this agitation for Sunday Closing had so filled the country that I could only find three such men. The Chairman was one of those. He is a man of very great business faculties and of positive integrity. County Court Judge Horatio Lloyd is a man of impartiality, who is not committed on this question, and who has a considerable familiarity with the habits and wishes of the people of the Principality. I hardly know what amount of education is necessary, in the opinion of hon. Gentlemen opposite, to enable a person to know Welsh wishes. Sir R. Harrington is a man of singular calmness and impartiality. He is one of my personal friends, and I have often admired this Gentleman's legal knowledge and acumen. With regard to the other members of the Commission, I appointed two gentlemen who had committed themselves, one on one side and the other on the other. I thought Mr. Hibbert was a most desirable person to serve on this Commission; he had voted in favour of Sunday closing and local option, and his record was therefore immaculate. The fifth member had committed himself on the other side. The only endeavour has been to appoint a fair Commission, who will secure the confidence of all who desire a full and impartial inquiry.

SIR W. LAWSON rose to speak.

*MR. W. H. SMITH (interrupting): I would remind hon. Members that unless the Motion for the Adjournment is taken by ten minutes to seven, no adjournment will be possible.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I do not wish to interfere with the adjournment, but I want to make one appeal to the right hon. Gentleman. He has said that when the House meets again he intends to take the Tuesdays. The right hon. Gentleman will only get four hours a week in that way. The Government are strong, and have got on so well with their business that I venture to ask the right hon. Gentleman to be merciful and just to leave the private Members their little ewe lambs.

Question put, and agreed to

OFFICIAL SECRETS [EXPENSES].

(No. 97.)

Resolution reported:

"That it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the expenses of the Prosecution in Scotland or Ireland of a misdemeanour under any Act of the present Session to prevent the disclosure of official Documents and Information."

Resolution agreed to.

POLITICAL OFFICES PENSIONS ACT (1869) REPEAL BILL. (No. 77.)

Order for resuming adjourned debate on Second Reading (24th May), read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

PUBLIC INCOME AND EXPENDITURE, 1888-9.

Return ordered,

"Of Analyzed Account of the Public Income and Expenditure for the year ending on the 31st of March, 1889 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 293, of Session 1888)."—(*Mr. Hubbard.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled "An Act to amend the practice and proceedings of the Court of Chancery of the County Palatine of Durham." Palatine Court of Durham Bill (Lords).

Also, a Bill, intituled "An Act for amending and consolidating the enactments relating to Arbitration." Arbitration Bill (Lords).

ARBITRATION BILL (LORDS).

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday 17th June, and to be printed. (Bill 267.)

ASSIZES RELIEF BILL.

Lords Amendments to be considered upon Monday, 17th June, and to be printed. (No. 268.)

MOTION.

BI-METALLISM.

MR. CHAPLIN (Sleaford) submitted the following Motion, which he had upon the Paper:

"That this House considers that the recent divergence in the value of the precious metals is prejudicial in the highest degree to the finances and the Government of India, and that it seriously adds to the difficulties of trade between the United Kingdom and countries which possess a silver standard; it is further of opinion that the divergence has been primarily due to the monetary charges which occurred upon the Continent, and to the abandonment of the bi-metallic system which had prevailed in certain European countries prior to 1873; it has also viewed with great regret the recent and prolonged depression in trade and agriculture, and the consequent irregularity of employment for vast numbers of the population to which it believes that these changes have contributed in a material degree; and it therefore urges on Her Majesty's Government the importance of consulting the chief commercial nations, such as Germany and the United States, together with France and other countries which comprise the Latin Union, as to their readiness to join with the United Kingdom in a conference for the purpose of considering whether and how far a bi-metallic system can be re-established by international agreement in the interest of all the nations and communities concerned."

The right hon. Gentleman said,—Sir, I feel that I owe an apology to the House for having undertaken to introduce this question to its notice, and more particularly at a time which I fear is equally inconvenient to many hon. Members, as it is unfortunate for the Motion now before the House. Moreover, I could have wished that it had fallen to the lot of some one among the number of those eminent financial authorities whom we are able to reckon in this House, or, at all events, to some Member of greater Parliamentary position and influence than myself. For, Sir, I have never attempted to disguise for a moment from myself, whether it be with regard to the multitude of subjects which it touches, and the number and great variety of the questions which it may effect, or to its intricate and complicated character and the difficulty of making it thoroughly understood, or to the exact and possible scope of its effects if the views of bi-metallists should prevail, that this is essentially a question which ought not to be dealt with on any light or insufficient grounds. The Motion which I have placed on the Paper refers to the Report of the Currency Commission, and I wish to correct, in the first place, a wide misapprehension which appears to prevail as to the conclusions which were arrived at by the Commissioners in their Reports, of which I may remind the House that there are three. Now, I have seen it constantly stated, and sometimes in quarters which I confess not a little surprised me, that in regard to the various matters which were committed to their inquiry the Commissioners were hopelessly divided in their opinions. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in reply to a question put to him on the 2nd of April by the hon. Member for North Kensington, fell into this error himself. He was asked by my hon. Friend whether his attention had been drawn to the declaration of the Indian Government in the Budget statement for the

year, namely:—"That no solution of the currency question is possible without international agreement." And he replied as follows:—

"If the hon. Member means by the 'currency question' the question of bi-metallism, then it is true that no solution is possible without international agreement. But the point is whether it would be possible even with international agreement. That is a question upon which the Royal Commission is hopelessly divided."

Now, Sir, I venture to say that that expression of opinion on the part of my right hon. Friend, as I will prove to the House in a moment, is an absolutely misleading and inaccurate statement. For that is precisely one of the points, and a most important point it is, upon which the Commissioners, so far from being hopelessly divided, one and all of them put their names to paragraphs in which they were absolutely unanimous in opinion. That Commission was appointed to inquire into four things in particular—firstly, as to the causes of the recent divergence in the relative value of the precious metals; secondly, into the consequences which had followed upon that divergence, and whether they were causing permanent and important evils; thirdly, if that was found to be the case, whether a remedy was possible; and, fourthly, if a remedy was possible, whether it would be expedient in the general interests to adopt it. Now, Sir, with regard to the first and third of these points, it is only necessary to turn to two or three paragraphs of the Report itself to ascertain without doubt the views of the Commissioners. I do not wish to delay the House for a moment longer than I can help, but they must forgive me if I quote three short paragraphs upon these points, for it is a matter of the first importance. With regard to the first point, the views of the Commissioners will be found in paragraphs 192 and 198 of Part I. of the Report. In paragraph 192 there occurs this passage:—

"Undoubtedly the date which forms the dividing line between an epoch of approximate fixity in the relative value of gold and silver and one of marked instability is the year when the bi-metallic system, which had previously been in force in the Latin Union, ceased to be in full operation; and we are irresistibly led to the conclusion that the operation of that system, established as it was in countries the population and commerce of which were considerable, exerted a material influence upon the relative value of the two metals. So long as that system was enforced we think that, notwithstanding the changes in the production and use of the precious metals, it kept the market price of silver approximately steady at the ratio fixed by law between them—namely, $15\frac{1}{2}$ to 1."

And, again, in Section 198 they say—

"The action of the Latin Union in 1873 broke the link between silver and gold which had kept the price of the former, as measured by the latter, constant at about the legal ratio; and when this link was broken the silver market was open to the influence of all the factors which go to affect the price of a commodity."

That paragraph was signed by all the 12 Commissioners, and it shows, I think, pretty clearly what were their views as to the causes of the divergence. What do they say as to the possibility of a remedy? It will be found in Section 107 of Part 2 of the Report. It is as follows—

"The first step towards answering the inquiry we have proposed to ourselves is to determine the subsidiary question whether a bi-metallic arrangement could create and maintain a stable ratio between silver and gold. We think that in any conditions fairly to be contemplated in the future, so far as we can forecast them from the experience of the past, a stable ratio might be maintained if the nations we have alluded to were to accept and strictly adhere to bi-metallism at the suggested ratio. We think that if in all these countries gold and silver could be freely coined, and thus become exchangeable against commodities at the fixed ratio, the market value of silver, as measured by gold, would conform to that ratio and not vary to any material extent."

That paragraph again is adopted by all the Commissioners, and I am quite unable therefore to perceive the hopeless division of opinion of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke. And the only modification of that view is to be found in a Memorandum at the end of Part 2, in which two of the Commissioners out of the 12, the Member for London University and Mr. Birch, expressed their doubts as to the permanent stability of any given ratio, although even they admit that it could and probably would be maintained for a very considerable time. Where the Commissioners differed, and the only respect in which they differed, so far as I know, was in this—namely, the gravity of some of the evils which were alleged, and the expediency of the remedy which we proposed. Six of the Commissioners, of whom I had the honour to be one, were of opinion that the evils in question were of a magni-

tude to call for a remedy and to call for it without delay. The remaining six, upon the other hand, while admitting the existence of many of the evils, and denying none of them, and while acknowledging in those cases, even where they had doubts, that they deserved the gravest consideration, yet were of opinion that some of them had not been proved to their entire satisfaction, and consequently they were afraid of proposing the remedy which we recommend, although they acknowledged it was possible and would probably be efficacious The House, then, will perceive that on the two principal points of the inquiry, around which in the past the bi-metallic controversy has been chiefly waged, the Commissioners, so far from being hopelessly divided, have been shown to be practically unanimous in opinion. That is one misapprehension to which I was anxious to call attention at the outset, and another is this. In Section 120 of Part 2 of the Report there will be found a statement which is vouched for by the President and five other members of the Commission, as one of the reasons against the adoption of bi-metallism, to this effect—namely—

> "That the change which we propose is tremendous, and that the novelty of our proposal in itself is sufficient to excite apprehensions which might not be without danger."

Again, Sir, I venture to say, with all possible respect, that that is a statement which is eminently and entirely calculated to mislead. I affirm distinctly, and I challenge contradiction, that it is an entire mistake to suppose that there is anything whatever new in what is called bi-metallism. On the contrary, although it is perfectly true that in this country we adopted a gold standard and became mono-metallic ourselves in 1816, prior to which we were always distinctly bi-metallic or in the enjoyment of a silver standard, yet bi-metallism existed all that time upon the Continent, and we in England lived, and all the business of the world was conducted, under the full effects and advantages of a bi-metallic system, which were felt and were universal in all the commercial countries of the world for the whole of the present century, and, indeed, in one form or another for a period long before that, probably at least 200 years prior to 1873. The only novelty in our proposition, if novelty indeed it is at all, is this — that England should take the lead in asking other nations to consider whether it would be possible in the general interest to revert to such a system, with advantage to all the communities concerned; and, if that were so, that she should join with them in the endeavour to arrive at a common understanding for the purpose. Si , it appeared to me that these were two very common and prominent misapprehensions, which I should do well to clear up at the outset. And now I think, perhaps, that in order to make myself intelligible to hon. Members, some of whom, it is possible, may not have thoroughly studied this question for themselves, that I ought to preface what I have to say by a reference, however brief, to the history of this question in the past. Having done that, I will explain exactly what the bi-metallic system was, which prevail up to 1873. Thirdly, I will show the circumstances under which it came to an end, and the consequences which have followed upon its abandonment; and fourthly, I will put before the House what it is that we propose. Now, with regard to the first of these points. It will not be necessary for me, I hope, to go back further than the beginning of the present century at all events, and within the limits of that period. The history of the question is very briefly this. From as far back as 1803 up to 1873 the Mint of France, and from 1865 to 1873 the Mints of certain countries on the Continent belonging to what was known as the Latin Union, in which France also was included, were open to the free coinage of silver—that is to say, to the unlimited coinage of silver as well as to the coinage of gold. The countries which composed the Latin Union were five—namely, France, Belgium, Spain, Italy, and afterwards Greece. And their Mints were compelled by law to convert into coin all the silver and all the gold that was brought to them at a given weight and fineness. The effect of that law was to establish a fixed proportionate value, or, as is more technically termed, a fixed ratio between them; that ratio at the time being in the proportion of 15½ of silver to one of gold. All the silver thus converted in coin became legal tender money, available for the discharge of debts to any amount within the limits of the several States of

the Union, equally with gold, at the ratio which was fixed law. The results of that system were as follows:—In the first place, it gave to silver a position and a value as legal tender money equally with gold at the legal ratio; secondly, the ratio never varied except within the narrowest limits, but remained practically steady from the beginning of the century up till 1873; and, thirdly, although the practice of the system was limited to the five countries, the effects of the system were universal, and were felt and were enjoyed by every civilized country in the world. Indeed, as a matter of fact, as one of our witnesses pointed out to the Commission, we in England for all those years were living under bi-metallism, though we might not know it, just as surely as our forefathers lived under the laws of gravitation prior to the time of Newton, although they did not know it either. Now, that was the system which was known as bi-metallism. It existed in France, as I have shown, almost from the commencement of the present century, beginning in 1803, and it continued to prevail both in France, and the other countries I have named, from 1865 up till 1873, without cessation. Unfortunately, however, in 1873, or, to be strictly accurate, shortly before that date, something happened which ultimately led to the abandonment of that system; and what is a curious and most remarkable coincidence—and I beg the House to observe it—is this: that concurrently with the disappearance of bi-metallism there set in a period of severe, prolonged, and unprecedented depression in almost every trade and industry you can mention, both here and on the Continent, and for which no human being has ever yet been able to assign any other valid or sufficient reason; and with regard to which, though I gladly admit there have been some signs of improvement lately, yet with regard to many others, and notably the cotton industry, the agricultural industry as a whole, and I fear I must add the iron industry, there has been continued depression from that period up to the present. Now, what ultimately led to its abandonment was the demonetization of silver by Germany. Germany, which had previously had a purely silver currency, determined to convert her silver currency into a gold one. A favourable opportunity was presented by the payment of the enormous indemnity by France to Germany at the close of the Franco-German war, and the German policy in that respect was accordingly carried out with results which it is absolutely certain were neither foreseen nor contemplated at the time. Large quantities of the silver which had been withdrawn from circulation in pursuance of this policy in Germany were brought to the French and Belgian mints, who were bound by law to coin them. Enormous quantities of silver in consequence were coined in this way at the French and Belgian mints in the course of a single year alone. There gold was leaving them and being exported to Germany at the same time, the greater part either going directly or indirectly from France, and these two countries naturally became apprehensive lest they should be left with silver alone. A convention of the States of the Latin Union accordingly was summoned, the general result of which was that it was decided in the month of January, 1874, to limit the annual coinage of silver to a fixed amount in each of the five countries in future. The free coinage of silver, therefore, and that is the cardinal point, without which it became impossible to maintain the fixed ratio in future, was suspended at that date, and from that moment the bi-metallic system ceased to exist. Well, now, Sir, I am quite aware that that is but an imperfect description of the history of the question in the past, but it may, perhaps, be sufficient to enable hon. Members to follow me in the arguments which I desire to submit to the House. I come then to the next point, and I want the House to consider what have been the consequences of these monetary changes, and the way in which various interests have been and are being affected by them, both here and in other countries in the world. These consequences, for the purposes of this discussion, have been, in my opinion, mainly two. They led, in the first place, to a marked appreciation of gold, and in the second, to a wide divergence in the relative values of the precious metals. With the permission of the House, I will deal for a short time with each of these consequences in turn. The fact of appreciation, I think, can scarcely be denied. Indeed, it is only another name for

a general fall in the prices of commodities, and that there has been such a general fall in a vast number of articles, since 1873, is a matter of fact and not of opinion. I do not mean to say that the whole fall in prices has been due, by any means, to appreciation alone. Other causes, no doubt, have contributed to that fall as well, and it is impossible for anyone to decide precisely how much of the fall is owing to the one cause and how much to the other. But that some part, and probably a large part, is the result of appreciation I hardly think can be disputed. If it is, I should have to cite a whole host of witnesses, who are great authorities in support of that contention. The very first that I should call would be the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. No one has expressed himself more emphatically or ably on that point than my right hon. Friend. Next I should take the authority of Mr. Giffen, who has maintained the same proposition; and his opinion I regard as all the more important and impartial, for I have reason to know, though I do not at all despair of him in future, that he is not converted to the bi-metallic view, at all events at present. I might also quote the high authority of Lord Beaconsfield, who, in one of the last speeches that he made in the House of Lords, I think in the year 1879, expressly adopted the theory of the appreciation of gold. He was speaking in a debate on agricultural depression, in which he attributed the depression to three causes in particular—bad harvests, foreign competition, and the appreciation of gold. "Gold," he said, after arguing the question minutely and at considerable length, "is every day appreciating in value, and as it appreciates in value the lower become prices. This, then, I think, is the third cause." Next I should cite the Report of Lord Iddesleigh's Commission on the Depression of Trade. The Majority Report of that Commission was signed by 19 out of the 24 Commissioners, and in their enumeration of the influences which had tended to produce depression they gave "a leading place," to use the language of the Report, to the fall in prices due to the appreciation of the standard of value. Finally I should come to the Report which we are engaged in discussing, in which all the Commissioners, some in a greater and some in a less degree, acknowledge the fact of the appreciation of gold. Some people, I know, maintain that the fall may be altogether accounted for by a greatly increased production of commodities in all parts of the world and by greatly increased facilities for their production. There are others, again—and that is the view of six of our colleagues on the Commission—who, while admitting that appreciation is undoubtedly a factor in the case, nevertheless attribute the chief part of the fall in prices to causes directly affecting commodities themselves. In that contention it seems to me that they are met with two formidable difficulties at once. They appear to forget that *pari passu* with increased production there has been a wide increase in the area of civilization and an immense addition to the population of the world; and there is certainly no proof that in proportion to the demand and to the increased population the supply of commodities to-day is greater than it ever was before. That is one difficulty, and the other is this—Are we to suppose that none of these incentives to increased production were in operation, and that if they were in operation they had no effect prior to the year 1873? I cannot find the slightest proof either that the supply of commodities generally has increased or that the cost of production has diminished at a greater rate in the 10 or 15 years which have elapsed since what is called the rupture of the bi-metallic par than was the case in other periods of like duration previous to that date On the contrary, it would seem to be absolutely certain that it was shortly after, and no doubt in consequence of the great discoveries of science, the invention of steam, of electricity, and the telegraph, that the most marked advances in production were apparent; and yet there is no record of any general or permanent fall in prices such as that which we have seen of late. I acknowledge that facilities for production are habitually increasing, and the cost of production is constantly growing less; but these are factors which have been in operation since the world began, and while their tendency is to gradually depress the prices of commodities, they are not sufficient in themselves to account for this

wholly exceptional and abnormal fall in prices in gold using countries which has been apparent since 1873, and only since that time. Until then these objections which I urge against the theories which are advanced on the part of our opponents are met and fully answered, I must be permitted to argue my case upon the assumption that there has been a distinct appreciation of gold as a fact which can neither be disputed nor denied. Now, why has gold appreciated, and what is the meaning of the term? Gold has appreciated since 1873, in my humble judgment, for the simple and sufficient reason that gold has had to do, so far as the metals are concerned, a larger proportion of the work which formerly was done partly by gold and partly by silver; consequently in proportion to the work which it has had to do gold has become relatively scarce, and therefore more valuable than it was before. This is, of course, a gain and a great advantage to those who are fortunate enough to be the owners of the gold—that is to say, to men who derive their fortunes from the possession of gold or from fixed incomes, or from the funds or from investments the interest upon which is payable in gold; but it is a corresponding loss to the owners of every other kind of property and commodity in the world, and above all to the working classes of this country, for the great commodity which they have to sell and which they must exchange for gold is the labour and the toil of their families and themselves. The answer to this argument, of course, is this:—That may be quite true, but the appreciation of gold cuts both ways. If you get less for what you have to sell, so also you give less for everything you want to buy, and it comes to the same thing in the end. That, again, would be true, and the argument would be unanswerable if there were no such things as fixed charges and obligations to pay in gold already in existence, and if the prices of all commodities had fallen in the same proportion. But then we know that that is not the case; and what I want to lay stress upon, and what I want to impress upon the House is this—that however much gold may continue to appreciate, however much more value it may become than it was before, these fixed charges and obligations must still be met in full, whatever it may cost the debtor to obtain the amount of appreciated gold which is necessary to meet them. Now, I ask the House to consider what an enormous burden it is that is imposed in this way upon the industries of the country when we remember that the fixed charges already in existence of one kind or another have been estimated by men who are competent to judge at no less, take them altogether, than the gigantic sum of 4,000 millions of money. I do not vouch for the accuracy of these figures myself, although I have great confidence in the general accuracy of those who are responsible for them. But in order to avoid any possible exaggeration, let me take them at one-half, which must be well within the mark; for we know that the National Debt and the Municipal Debt of the country alone are estimated at 1,000 millions, and the mortgages upon all kinds of property in the United Kingdom are put at another 1,000 millions also. Now, what does all this mean? It means that when gold appreciates, and precisely in the same proportion in which gold appreciates, so much more of the produce and the labour of the country must be given in exchange for the gold which is required to meet these obligations. The only way in which the gold can be obtained is by exchanging for it something that there is to sell, and excepting land which is unreclaimed and in a natural state, and therefore practically worthless, I know of nothing that there is to sell which is not the product of the labour of the country. Those who gain by the present state of things are the great gold capitalists of the country, whose capital is invested, not in industrial undertakings which provide employment for great numbers of people, but in fixed investments, and also the limited class who are in the enjoyment of fixed incomes or pensions, which are payable in gold. Those who suffer, on the other hand, are the workers and the producers of the country. The former class can be counted by thousands, and they are a mere fraction of the community as a whole; the latter class, upon the other hand, represent the masses and the millions of the people, and that is why I say that in a condition of society like our own the appreciation of

the standard of value causes, and must always cause, grave and serious and important evils to the great majority of the community. I now pass from this subject—namely, the appreciation of gold, and I come to the second consequence which has resulted from the monetary changes—namely, the wide divergence in the relative value of silver and gold. It has taken the form of a heavy fall in the gold price of silver. Silver was valued in 1873 in the proportion of 15½ of silver to 1 of gold; now it has fallen of 22. Silver, which was worth in 1873 60d. an ounce, is now, according to the latest quotations, worth only 42d. an ounce. The rupee, again, which is the coin of the realm in India, was formerly worth something very nearly approaching to 2s. Now it is worth only 1s. 4d. These figures show how serious has been the fall in the gold price of silver; but silver is the subject not only of a fall in price, but also of constant fluctuations in its value as well, and by these two causes—namely, by the fall and by the constant fluctuations—a whole variety of interests are affected in a variety of ways. Now let me take the effects of the fluctuations in the value of silver first. Take that portion of our trade, for instance, which is conducted with silver-using countries. It forms a large and an important portion of the whole. What is the position of the English merchant in that case? Every transaction into which he enters is always liable to an alteration in the value of the metal in which he must be paid. Either he must take that risk or he must insure himself against it. Either alternative inflicts an additional burden or a loss on him, and to that extent his trade is hampered and is made less profitable than it was before. It must be obvious that trade between two countries, both of which use the same metal as their standard, is free from the risk and inconvenience to which trade is always liable between countries, one of which uses gold and the other silver as its standard; and one of the first effects then of this constant fluctuation is to encourage and to stimulate trade between two silver-using countries, to the prejudice and the great discouragement of trade between countries one of which, like England, uses gold, and the other of which, like India or China or Japan, uses silver. There is a very remarkable illustration of this argument to be found in some figures which are given at page 27 of the Report. They refer to the growth of the export trade in cotton yarns between India and other silver-using countries as compared with the same export trade in England during the period of the ten years which elapsed between 1877 and 1888, and what they show is this—that while in England during those ten years that particular trade has been practically stationary, in India it has increased by over 1,000 per cent, and the returns for the year 1888, which are not included in these figures, are much greater even than they were in 1887. Now, that is owing partly to the fall in the price of silver and to its exchange conditions, as well as to the constant fluctuations; but, in any case, it shows that apparently we are losing rapidly—if, indeed, we have not lost it altogether already—that portion of our trade with the East, and that, I venture to think, is a grave and important consideration which is well deserving of the attention of the House. This is all the more remarkable when we remember that it was shown in evidence before the Commission, and has never been contradicted or refuted up to now, that after allowing for all the advantages of cheap labour in India, after allowing for the saving of the cost of transport and allowing for the advantages of having the material on the spot, yet, notwithstanding all this, it was conclusively proved before our Commission that we are able to manufacture those particular goods at so much per pound cheaper than they can be manufactured in India. That evidence, moreover, was substantially confirmed by a decision of the Chamber of Commerce in Manchester itself, after a committee of that Chamber had been expressly appointed to inquire into and to sift this question to the utmost. Now, Sir, I turn to another point, and I take the case of Indian finance, which suffers both from the fall and from the fluctuations in silver as well. India, it must be remembered, owes a large debt in gold. She has to make payments annually in gold amounting altogether to 15 millions sterling. Her revenue, on the other hand, is collected in silver, part of which must be afterwards exchanged for gold in order to enable her to meet her obligations. Now, with the

rupee at 1s. 4d. it takes a vastly increased number of rupees to exchange for 15 millions sterling compared with what it did when the rupee was worth 2s. The difference at present amounts to some 72,000,000 rupees a year, all of which has to be met by greatly increased taxation, which would not be needed and would not be necessary but for the fall in the value of silver which has occurred. India is taxed already to as great an extent as she ought to bear, and probably as she can bear.

MR. MACLEAN: No.

MR. CHAPLIN: I defer to the great authority of my hon. Friend, who is more conversant in Indian matters than myself, but I think I have heard authorities express an opinion that if, for any reason, it was necessary to impose any greatly increased taxation upon that country, it might not improbably lead to grave political complications which every well-wisher of the Empire would desire to see averted. But that, Sir, is not all, for the fall in silver has been hitherto progressive, and no one can say that a further fall in silver may not occur at any moment; and consequently, with the value of silver constantly changing, it is impossible for any Minister or any statesman, however experienced he may be, to forecast with anything like accuracy what revenue may be required or what number of rupees he must collect in order to meet his obligations. All his calculations may be turned upside down at any moment by some sudden and unexpected fall in the price of silver, and that is why Indian Budgets are so constantly upset by what is called a fall in the exchange, and why they suffer so severely by what is known as loss by the exchange. Many people think, and I confess I am inclined to that opinion for my own part, that unless something is done shortly to deal effectively with this question we must look forward to considerable and further falls in silver value. Look at the position in America at this moment. The Bland Act, which requires the annual coinage of a minimum amount of silver in the United States, undoubtedly exercises for the time a steadying influence upon the value of that metal. But if we in England persist, as we have done up to now, in ignoring all the difficulties which are everywhere created by the present position of the silver question, it is not impossible by any means that America may refuse to continue coining silver, and that she may think fit to suspend the Bland Act altogether. At all events, that is a matter entirely within her own discretion, and in respect to which we are absolutely at her mercy. If she elected to take that course, it is no exaggeration to say that we should be immediately confronted with something not very far removed from the bankruptcy of our Indian possessions. The rupee would go down almost certainly to a shilling, and possibly even lower than that. And as every fall of a penny in the value of a rupee makes the difference of a million sterling to the Indian Exchequer, we may find ourselves confronted any morning by the action of America, with the deficit of, it may be four, or five, or six millions sterling in the Budget of that portion of our Empire. I ask the House, Is that a condition of affairs which we ought to ignore? Is that a position in which we are justified in allowing any portion of our Empire to be situated for a single moment longer than we can help? I noticed an Amendment on the Paper standing in the name of the hon. Baronet opposite, in which he admits that the present state of things has had an injurious effect upon Indian finances, but that there is no sufficient reason why action should be taken on our part. Well, I confess that I differ with him *in toto*, and I can only say that I am supported in my views by some of the highest possible authorities upon this question. I should like, if the House will allow me, to read a letter which I have recently received upon this subject from Lord Dufferin, and which he has given me permission to make any use I like. I wrote to him to ask him for his opinion, and his reply, dated Rome, April 24th, 1889, is as follows:—

"My dear Chaplin,—In reply to your letter of April 14th, I can only say that, as Viceroy of India, my attention was continually preoccupied with the terrible difficulties affecting Indian finance, not only by the depreciation but, what was even worse, by the fluctuations, (hear, hear) "in the value of silver. This decrease of a penny in the value of silver is tantamount to the loss of a million to the Indian Exchequer. In framing our Budgets we always felt ourselves face to face with an unknown and immeasurable disturbing force, which had the power of overthrowing all our calculations, and had not my Government

possessed advisers of great financial ability the results would have been most disastrous. Consequently, from an Indian point of view, I have no hesitation in saying that any means which could be devised for maintaining a steady relation between the value of gold and silver would be of the greatest benefit, not only to the Government of India, but to all classes of the Indian community; for, although I have heard it argued by some persons of financial knowledge and ability in India that the depreciation of silver has been beneficial to the export trade of the country, there can be no doubt that, even from their own point of view, the constant fluctuation in the relative value of the two metals was detrimental to commerce."

The remainder of Lord Dufferin's letter is devoted to the subject of the adoption of bi-metallism in England, a portion of the question which he says he has not had time to examine with sufficient accuracy or care to justify him in expressing an opinion. Well, now, Lord Dufferin is a man, as everybody knows, of the highest possible experience and ability, and his views upon the question of Indian finance, I venture to say, are deserving of the most careful attention of the House. I trust that I shall, therefore, be pardoned for reading his letter upon this occasion. I am sorry I have been obliged to detain the House at so great a length, but I am afraid it is impossible to deal with a question like this very shortly. So far I have been dealing with the results of the divergence in the value of metals which are not denied by any one. They are described by Lord Herschell and his friends in that part of the Report which they have signed as the proved evils which were brought before them. They expressed themselves with regard to those proved evils quite as strongly as we could have done ourselves. I am very anxious that this should be clearly understood, because it affords another answer to the statements which are being so repeatedly and so erroneously made as to the wholly inconclusive character of our Report. So serious, I confess, do I regard these proved evils, that on these grounds by themselves I should be quite prepared to urge the recommendations which we make, even if they stood alone. But they do not stand by any means alone. There are other interests nearer home which are closely connected with the divergence in the value of the metals, the manufacturing and the agricultural interests of this country. I will take the cotton industry of Lancashire for one, with the millions of people whom it employs, and the wheat-growing industry of this country for another. Both of these great industries are directly affected by the fall in the exchange, because the exchange operates on all commodities which pass between gold and silver-using countries, and both cotton and wheat are included in them. Now, in order to understand the effects of the exchange two things must be borne in mind to begin with. First, that, unlike the case in England, the prices of commodities in India have not altered, but have remained practically stationary as they were before. And the second is this—that however much the rupee may have fallen in relation to gold, in relation to commodities in India it has not fallen at all. In other words, the same number of rupees will no longer exchange for the same amount of gold as formerly, but they will exchange for—that is, they will purchase—as much of any commodity or commodities in India as they ever did before. I do not deny that this has appeared strange to myself as it has to other people. But it is a fact which was vouched for by every single witness who gave evidence before the Commission, and I believe it was the unanimous opinion of the Commissioners themselves. I should like to show in half a dozen words how the export of cotton from this country is affected. Take the case of cotton goods which are sent from Manchester to Bombay, on which, in order to make a profit, it is necessary to realize the sum, say, of £10,000. With the rupee at 2s., £10,000 is realized by the payment of 100,000 rupees; with the rupee at, say, 1s. 6d., it takes, upon the other hand, 133,000 rupees to realize that sum. Now comes the question. Will the Indian importer give, can he afford to give, this greatly-increased price for precisely the same article as he bought before? Obviously he cannot, and we know that he cannot, because, as I have shown already, prices in India have not risen, but have remained practically the same. The English exporter, therefore, must either be content to take the old silver price—namely, 100,000 rupees, which at the present rate of exchange means only £7,500 instead of £10,000, which he got before, or he must forego his

sale. In either case he undergoes a loss which must directly be traced to the fall in the value of silver. Well, now, let me take the case of wheat which is brought from India to England. It is exactly the converse of the last case. When wheat was making 40s. the quarter, and the rupee was worth 2s., the English grower, of course, got £2 for his wheat and the Indian got 20 rupees. Wheat, however, now has fallen to 30s., and the rupee has likewise fallen, let us say for the sake of argument, to 1s. 6d.—as a matter of fact it has fallen a great deal more. The English grower, therefore, is getting less by 10s. per quarter for every quarter that he sells. The Indian grower, upon the other hand, is saved from any loss by the fall in the exchange. £1 10s. in gold will still exchange with the rupee at 1s 6d. for 20 rupees, and those rupees when he gets them will buy as much of any commodity or commodities for the Indian grower as they ever bought before. He is enabled, therefore, by the fall in the exchange to take the lower price of 30s. a quarter, which presumably he could not otherwise afford, and as the export of wheat from India to Europe has reached already very large dimensions, the market price of wheat in this way is unnaturally and artificially depressed in all the gold-using countries of the world. Now, Sir, the difficulties of agriculture, and especially of the wheat growing industry are great enough, God knows, already. I put aside all questions of Protection and Free Trade. I know I am tainted in the eyes of Gentlemen opposite on those questions. I ask the House to consider this question. Is it wise? Is it statesmanlike? Is it good or sound policy on our part to view with complacency the possible ruin and destruction of two great industries such as those I have named by these purely artificial means, which are the result of nothing else but foreign legislation. Ought we to acquiesce in this state of matters for the sake of a possible increase in momentary cheapness, remembering that any further considerable fall in the value of silver may close every mill in Lancashire to-morrow, and may render it impossible to grow with profit one single quarter of the grain, which is our staple food, in this country for the future? If that is so, I confess I am totally unable to comprehend the doctrines of modern Free Trade. They seem to me to have degenerated into nothing but a cry for "cheapness at any cost," no matter how it is produced, and which I firmly believe is absolutely in contravention of all the principles and doctrines and teachings of Mr. Cobden himself. Now, what we propose is simply to revert to a system such as that which prevailed upon the Continent prior to the year 1873. But in order to do this it is necessary, in our opinion, that Germany and the United States, together with the countries of the Latin Union, should join with the United Kingdom in an agreement for the purpose, and accordingly we desire that the English Government should consult the chief commercial nations as to their readiness to join in a Conference with the United Kingdom for the purpose of considering this question. There is good reason to believe—indeed, I know—that they would not be indisposed to concur in that proposal. The main difficulty which is always held up to us is this—namely, the ratio which is to be fixed, and we are always asked what ratio it is that we propose? The answer to that question appears to be simple, and, I think, conclusive. Obviously that is a matter which can only be settled by the nations and communities who are directly concerned. I should say that the view of the bi-metallists generally is this—that almost any ratio would be better than none; but it is idle for them to lay down a hard and fast line, as a preliminary to negotiations upon a point which can only be settled by the Conference itself. The ratio, in my judgment, is one of those questions which is certain to settle itself; and long before it is enacted by any legislation the market price of silver will conform to any ratio which is fixed upon. The stock argument, the standard argument, of course against the whole of these proposals is this—that you cannot fix by law the relative value of the metals. [Sir R. FOWLER: "Hear, hear."] Well, I have shown already that the twelve Commissioners, at all events, think you can. And, further, I say this—that what I am told cannot be done has been done already, and with complete success for

at least 100 years. It rests with our opponents to show what are the circumstances which render it impossible to-day which were not also in operation prior to 1873. No one has succeeded in doing this at present—I do not think they ever will—and until they do so it is useless to pursue the subject further. Now, I do not know if the House would wish me to anticipate any of the objections which are commonly raised to our proposal. If I do so, it can only be with the utmost possible brevity. We are told that this is nothing but an endeavour to raise prices. On this point I may refer hon. Members to the end of the second Report of the Commission, where will be found a memorandum signed by the great advocate of cheapness, Sir Thomas Farrer, in which he says that these monetary changes have done nothing to lower prices. If that be true, then our proposition is to do nothing to raise them. If I am asked my own opinion, I think that in the course of years by degrees the effect of the adoption of our proposition would be in a modified degree something like the effect of the gold discoveries in former years. Well! But is there any harm in that? It is undoubtedly the fact that the great discoveries of gold in those days led to an era of general prosperity, such as the world has seldom seen, and I, for one, should hail with rejoicing the return of such prosperity to-day. Cheapness, it must be remembered, may arise from either of two things—from increased facilities of production, or from a contraction of the currency. We have nothing to say, and we propose nothing whatsoever, against cheapness which arises from increased facilities of production; but cheapness which arises from a contraction of the currency we regard as an undoubted evil, for the reasons which are given at great length in our Report. I observed an article in the *Economist* this morning in which the writer challenges bi-metallists to answer in the course of this debate some of the objections which have been urged to their proposals. I accept the challenge, but I will only detain the House a few minutes longer. I accept it the more readily because, though bitterly opposed to us, the *Economist* is in that section of the Press one of the few papers that have given profitable study and attention to the subject. We are asked, "How is it that you can reconcile your theories with the fact that prices and wages are rising at the present time?" I commenced my observations by acknowledging that there were many causes which had contributed to the fall in prices in addition to the appreciation of gold, and I said it was impossible to decide how much was owing to the one cause and how much to the other. That there is a rise in prices in some cases at present, is owing to the fact that some of these causes are ceasing in their operation. But the rise in prices and in wages is by no means universal; prices and wages are in many cases no better than they were before. Then we are asked how it is that trade has increased more between England and the silver-using countries than between England and the gold-using countries? The explanation is simple and complete. The ports of all the silver-using countries are free and perfectly open to English goods, and every one knows that the ports of nearly all gold-using countries are being closed to us by heavily restrictive and sometimes prohibitory tariffs. Then it is said, "If silver gives a bounty to the producer, how is that compatible with your statement that the present state of things inflicts injury on India?" I have already pointed out that the present state of things involves an addition of £6,000,000 of taxes which would not otherwise be required; and am I to be told that it is right, wise, statesmanlike, or judicious to impose £6,000,000 of taxes on the people of India in order to bolster up two or three industries in that country? They say, "Why legislate against the Indian producer?" My answer is this: Why are we to continue to acquiesce in foreign legislation which is producing the most unfortunate effects upon a vast number of the producers of this country? If I had to choose between the interests of Lancashire in cotton spinning and the interests of Bombay, I should take Lancashire in preference. It may be a very unfortunate thing that we should do anything to interfere with the cotton industry in India. But am I to be told that it is not ten times more serious to threaten with ruin and destruction the great cotton industry

of Lancashire? If it be a choice between the rajahs and ryots of India and the labourers and employers of this country, I would ask, Are we to bolster up the one to the ruin of the other? I have answered some of the objections only imperfectly, I know, for I do not wish to detain the House a single moment longer by answers to objections in anticipation, and I feel that I cannot, with anything like decency, prolong my observations, and that I have trespassed far too long upon the attention of the House. It has been exceedingly difficult to state this case with anything like brevity. Of this I am sure, and I hope the House will believe me, that I do not in any degree desire to dogmatize or force my views down the throats of others upon a question which is admitted to be of the most difficult and complicated nature. But it does so happen that it has been my fortune and my duty to pay some attention to the subject, and I became profoundly impressed with its importance. I have, therefore, tried to submit to the House some reasons which would make it in their opinion deserving of the full and careful consideration of Parliament. Upon the merits of those reasons, and of the arguments I have used to-night, it is not for myself to insist. But what I want to impress upon the House, what I ask hon. Members to remember, is the extremely moderate character of the proposals which we make. We maintain and we urge that this question deserves the fullest and most careful consideration of Parliament and the people, and, more than that, of those who alone can give effect to it—namely, the chief commercial nations of the world. The ultimate decision of this question must always, as a matter of course, rest in the hands of the House of Commons. Surely, therefore, Mr. Speaker, the proposal which I submit is not an extravagant request for a Member of the English Parliament to make. Surely it is not too much for the House of Commons to accept. I beg to move the Resolution which I have placed in your hands.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, the evils which have followed upon the monetary changes in 1873, can only be effectually dealt with by a Conference of the Chief Commercial Nations for the purpose of considering whether, and how far, a Bi-Metallic system can be re-established by International agreement in the interest of all the Nations and communities concerned."

*Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I rise to second the Motion of my right hon. Friend. I think I may congratulate the House of Commons upon the clear, luminous, and very comprehensive manner in which the right hon. Gentleman has dealt with a very large and difficult question. I may say that I am no new convert to the doctrine of bi-metallism. As long ago as 1876 I was led to give my adhesion to what is called the bi-metallic theory. I was educated on this question by means of my connection with the cotton trade of Lancashire and as a merchant trading with India. I was brought into contact with the suffering and misery caused to large classes of people by the heavy fall in the rate of exchange and the great check given to the industries of Lancashire. I was led to see that the rupture of the bi-metallic system of France was the chief cause of all the sufferings which ensued. I propose to-night to deal with the matter mainly from the commercial and industrial point of view as a business man closely connected with the trade of Lancashire, and to show why it is desirable that we should take part with other nations to re-establish the state of things under which our commerce flourished up to the year 1873. The first proposition I lay before the House is this—that great injury was done to this country by the destruction of the old par of exchange between silver and gold. We had virtually a fixed ratio between the metals for 70 years prior to 1873, and during that long period the French Mint was open to coin either metal without limit at the ratio of 15½ of silver to 1 of gold, making each legal tender to the fullest amount, and the effect was to keep that ratio between the metals fixed throughout the world, or with only infinitesimal fluctuations. During that long period the price of silver in London scarcely varied beyond 15¾ to 1 and 15¼ to 1. Yet during that period the yield of the metals fluctuated very much. At one time we had a yield of gold amounting to two millions, at another to 30 millions; at one time the yield of silver was three millions, at another 18 millions. At one

time the yield of silver was three times the value of gold, at another the yield of gold was three times the value of silver. Now, it is often said the relations between the metals are decided by natural laws, and artificial laws are totally incompetent to touch them. Let me point out that during that long period we had a fixed value as between gold and silver, though we had a conjunction of circumstances that might be expected to destroy this fixed ratio. England by sending her gold or silver to the French Mint could always exchange the metals for one another at a fixed rate, and so the merchants who dealt with a silver-using country like India or China could trade with as much safety as if they were gold-using countries. We had, what I will venture to call, the inestimable benefit of identical money in the world of commerce. It mattered nothing whether the merchant sold for gold or silver; his consignments brought him the same value. Capital could flow from gold-using to silver-using countries without loss and with no fear of virtual confiscation. England was able to lend vast sums to silver-using countries with interest payable in silver without dread of loss or partial repudiation. I can hardly overstate the importance of this to a rich country like ours with superfluous capital. The silver-using countries are the poor countries, the undeveloped countries that require capital. Nature seems to have designed that the rich countries that accumulate capital should lend to the poor ones to develop their resources. A great part of British trade consisted of loans to India and other silver-using countries, which loans were spent in railway material and other products, keeping our industries at home fully employed. All this was rudely shaken by the rupture of the system in 1873, after which it became unsafe for our capitalists to invest in silver loans, and equally unsafe for silver-using countries to guarantee interest in gold. To speak metaphorically, there came to be two railway gauges instead of one, and this caused an interruption of traffic. The banks in England could no longer safely invest their funds in Calcutta, although the bank rate in Calcutta was recently 12 per cent and in London only two, because a fall of exchange might turn their profit into loss. Hence arose accumulation of capital at home, a great rise in interest-bearing securities, and much speculation in unsound undertakings. The difficulty of making railways in India was also greatly increased, and the flow of trade between this country and India, China, Japan, and other silver-using countries was much impeded. But the greatest evil in my judgment was the appreciation of the gold standard. Some deny this appreciation of gold, but—not to dispute about words—I will call it an increase in the purchasing power of gold; and no one can deny that this took place during the enormous fall of prices from 1873 to 1886. Since then there has been a slight recovery in the fall of prices, but the average fall as compared with 1873 is still 30 per cent; at its lowest it was fully 35 per cent. The purchasing power of gold has therefore increased since 1873 by 43 per cent which is the equivalent of a fall of 30 per cent. According to a recent pamphlet issued by the Cobden Club, between 1873 and the present year the purchasing power of gold has risen 45 per cent. This fall of prices was the cause of the intolerable depression which this country underwent between 1873 and 1886-7, the worst period since Free Trade was established. Mr. Fielden, of Manchester, has made a calculation of the losses incurred by the working classes during this period. His estimate is that the working classes lost by fall in wages and want of employment no less than £85,000,000 annually, and that in the way of cheapened produce they gained £40,000,000; so there was a net loss of £45,000,000. The great trades union societies were reduced to the verge of bankruptcy; in 1886 they had almost no funds left to meet the wants of the great number of men out of employment. Trade has improved since, no doubt; I am glad to think it has very materially improved, but I hold that but for the demonetization of silver and the corresponding appreciation of gold the crisis would have come to an end many years since, and years of suffering would have been saved to the people of this country. The right hon. Gentleman has pointed out the great loss caused to the industrial classes by the rise in the burden of fixed payments. I have paid some attention to this subject for years past, and have done my best to make an

estimate of the amount of the fixed payments under which the industry of this country is carried on. I estimate that the total sum payable in this way for interest on national and local debts, railway bonds and debentures, ground rents, royalties, pensions, mortgages, life interests, and the like, is about £200,000,000 annually, representing a capital value of £5,000,000,000. All this is ultimately paid out of the produce of industry. As £100 will now purchase what previously to the great depression was purchaseable only for £143, it will be seen what an enormous advantage has been conferred on the classes who hold this class of property. The people, in fact, who have benefited are the money-lending, mortgage and bond-holding, and, in short, the non-working capitalists of the country. It takes now 40 or 50 per cent more of the produce of industry to meet these charges than it did in 1873. Dr. Giffen states:

"Appreciation is a most serious matter to those who have debts to pay. It prevents them gaining by the development of industry as they would otherwise gain. There may be compensations in other directions as by the lowering of the rate of interest which seems to take place as the result of appreciation, but on the whole the balance is against the debtor as compared with what it would have been if there were no appreciation.

That is the opinion of Dr. Giffen as it it is stated in his unanswerable pamphlet on the appreciation of gold. It may, perhaps, be difficult to grasp this question when we deal with these immense figures. Let me take a familiar illustration. Suppose in Lancashire a man built in 1873 a mill for £50,000, of which £20,000 was his own capital, and £30,000 borrowed on mortgage. The value of the mill is now about £35,000. It has depreciated 30 per cent, but the mortgage remains the same, and so he is only worth £5,000. Tens of thousands of such cases might be cited, and many instances in which the margin has wholly disappeared, and the mortgagee has become the owner of the property. Take the case of a landowner who had in 1873 property of the value of £10,000 a year, subject to charges of £5,000, and with a net income of £5,000 a year, he finds now his gross income reduced to £7,000 a year, and his available spending money diminished from £5,000 to £2,000, because he is still liable for the £5,000 of charges, though his rents have been reduced 30 per cent. I could give a multitude of cases in which the net income has been wholly swallowed up by the fixed charges. The same process is going on in all gold-using countries. More than half the land of France and Germany now belongs to mortgagees, and probably three-quarters of the land of Ireland. I believe that one main reason for the comparative failure of the Land Act of 1881 was this appreciation of gold, and the consequent fall in agricultural prices. Half of the agrarian trouble in Ireland would have been avoided but for the demonetization of silver. To the same cause is due in great measure the difficulty of the Egyptian people in meeting the claims of the bondholders, and also the rapid spread of Socialism throughout Europe. France, Germany, and Italy have greatly increased their tariffs within the last ten years in consequence of the fall of prices and consequent depression of trade. In my belief the general effect of the demonetization of silver has been a recurrence to a more protective policy than was the case before. I believe that if there had not been this monetary dislocation in Europe we should have freer trade than we have now. All the best economists hold that it is much better for a country that the standard should be depreciated rather than appreciated. Mr. Jevons, who is a high authority on the subject, says, speaking of the effect of the yield of gold from Australia and California, and prior to 1873:—

"I cannot but agree that, putting out of sight individual cases of hardship, if such exist, the fall in the value of gold must have had, and I should say has already had, a most powerful beneficial effect."

Now, our opponents meet us very generally by saying that we want dear prices and that the country requires cheap prices. I believe that the cry for cheap prices is very much exaggerated. There are ways of obtaining cheap prices which are very detrimental to a country. A reduction of prices caused by currency contraction is purely evil. During the Napoleonic wars this country contracted a Debt which has been estimated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) at about one-third of the capital of the country. In 1816 we adopted the sole gold stan-

dard, and the result was a prodigious fall of prices. The burden of the National Debt was practically doubled, and the prices fell 50 per cent. The effect of the fall of prices was really to confiscate a great deal of the property of the industrial classes in this country for the benefit of the financiers and fundholders. Between 1815 and 1849 great misery existed in this country, and this misery attained its maximum when prices were lowest. Then there was an entire swing of the pendulum. We had the gold discoveries in California and Australia, and for nearly 25 years, while prices kept rising, there never was a time when we had such prosperity in this country. Prices rose 40 per cent, but the average earnings of the working classes rose 75 per cent; the profits of capitalists were never so large, and 95 per cent of the population were undoubted gainers by the depreciation of the standard between 1848 and 1873, the losers being the holders of fixed investments, mortgagees, and *pensionaires*. For us to remonetize silver now would be to repeat in a smaller degree the effect of these gold discoveries. It is said that England is the creditor of the world. Well, it is true that England receives £100,000,000 annually of surplus imports over exports, but a large part of that surplus is payment for freight and another part is the result of industrial enterprizes in which we are interested—such as mines, railroads, tea and coffee plantations, &c., which would come all the same whether the currency was gold or paper or silver. The amount we receive for gold interest is limited, perhaps not more than £30,000,000 annually, and is partly balanced by silver interest. Among the objections urged to our views, is one that there can be no appreciation of gold, because the rate of interest is so low. I am sure I shall be upheld when I say that this is one of the emptiest and hollowest of contentions. Up to 1873, when gold was flowing in in large masses, we had a much higher rate of interest than we have had since. The amount of gold production has nothing to do with the rate of interest, except that when prices are rising trade is active, and interest is always higher; when prices are falling interest is always low. The fact is, that if we were to close up all the gold mines in the world for a hundred years, and prices were to fall 50 per cent, I venture to say that the rate of interest in this country would be lower than ever was known before. Another of the objections made to our theory is that the great fall in prices is owing to cheap transit and other economies in production; but these economies were in as active operation before 1873 as since.

An hon. MEMBER: Nothing like it.

*MR. S. SMITH: I venture to differ from the hon. Member. That period was one of wonderful invention and discovery when, but for the gold discoveries, prices ought to have fallen. In place of that prices rose 40 per cent between 1849 and 1873. The fall which has occurred since is equally the result of monetary causes, and has been as great in land and house property as in commodities at large. If we had been a silver-using country, should we have had any such fall at all? No; the silver-using countries have escaped it, and all the consequent depression. Then we are told there is no scarcity of gold. There never will be a scarcity of gold in the strict sense of the word, because prices will always adjust themselves; but if all the gold mines were shut for 100 years the fixed charges would constantly rise, so that the industrial classes would be completely ruined. Further, I allege, without fear of contradiction, that since 1873 we have given an immense stimulus to the competing industries of India as compared with our own. Take, for instance, the cotton trade. In India during 10 years ending 1885 the increase in cotton spindles was 105 per cent, and in looms 91 per cent. In Lancashire during the same period the increase in spindles was only 7 per cent and in looms 21 per cent, while one very large branch of the trade—namely, the supply of yarn for China and Japan has been almost wrested from Lancashire. That process is going on every day, and any one can see the reason why it is so. The reason is that these enormous burdens I have spoken about are always growing heavier in England, while they grow lighter in India. As an illustration, let us take the case of two men, each starting a cotton mill—one in Lancashire and the other in India, and commencing about 1873. Suppose each man has a capital of £20,000, and

that each mill is built at a cost of £50,000, the Lancashire man having a mortgage of £30,000 on his mill with interest at 5 per cent payable in gold, while the Indian has a similar mortgage payable in silver, and supposing they both started together, how would they stand to-day? The spinner in India would have had good trade all the time and no exchange troubles, while the spinner in Lancashire would have had 12 years falling prices. He would still have to pay £1,500 annually in gold upon his mortgage, while the man in India would have the same amount payable in silver, the value of which is yearly diminishing, so that to-day the one man would be paying £1,500 sterling in gold, while the other would be paying a sum in silver equal to about £1,000 in gold. The Indian manufacturer benefits by the lightening of burdens just as the Lancashire manufacturer suffers from the increase of burdens. The property of the man in Lancashire will have depreciated 30 per cent, and his mill will, therefore, be worth only £35,000 instead of £50,000, while he still owes £30,000 on mortgage. In India the manufacturer's property remains intact. The enormous advantage which the one trader thus has over the other is the chief reason why the trade is leaving the one country and going to the other. That state of things will continue so long as the exchange difficulty remains unsettled. It is the same with the jute trade, which is leaving Scotland and going to the valley of the Ganges, and it will always be the same where a silver-using and gold-using country are competing. If during the next ten years the rupee falls to 1s., we shall see a still greater transfer of manufactures to India, because it is hopeless for our producers to compete against such enormous odds. I do not want to do injustice to India, but simply wish fair play. All we say is that we should not load the dice against ourselves. But there is another side to the account. Every decline in exchange imposes on the Indian Government the necessity of levying additional taxation. Upon the whole, when everything is put into the scales India is no gainer, while this country is a loser. Some will meet me with the further objection that our trade is fairly good on the whole. I grant that it is. They say matters have settled down. "Why should we unsettle them again?" Well, my answer is we are not yet in a safe position. If we were, there would be a good deal to be said for letting things alone; but unfortunately we are on an inclined plane, and silver is sliding down stage by stage. I can see no reason whatever why the disastrous history of the last 15 years should not be repeated in the next 15 years if the nations do not agree to cure the source of the evil by remonetizing silver. There ought to be an international arrangement with the object of re-establishing silver. One of these days America may demonetize silver, the Bland Act having only been adopted as a temporary expedient; and when she does, all the miseries of the past few years will be repeated. Austria and Russia are both talking of demonetizing silver and resuming specie payments on a gold basis, and they will do it unless we have some international arrangement to re-establish silver. In that way we shall be driven on step by step, and shall be obliged at last to give India a gold currency. If preventive steps are not taken the intolerable loss to the Indian Government from the incessant fluctuations will become so great and silver will become so totally unstable as a standard of value that there will be no alternative except to give India a gold currency; and when that happens silver will be finally doomed, and will become a degraded metal like tin or iron. You will then probably see another prodigious fall in prices in all gold-using countries, and all fixed payments will become immensely heavier than they were before. You will give an further impetus to socialism, and no one can say what the result of such a madcap policy will be in Europe. I would remind the House of a few weighty words spoken by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer 10 years ago at the Conference at Paris In 1878 the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I believe that it would be a great misfortune if a propaganda against silver should succeed, and I protest against the theory according to which this metal must be excluded from the monetary system of the world. A campaign against silver would be extremely dangerous even to a country with a gold standard."

These were prophetic words, and I now

ask the right hon. Gentleman to prevent his predictions from coming true. At the time when those words were uttered nobody thought that the price of silver could fall as low as it is now. All the wise men said it was impossible; but why should it not fall still further during the next 10 or 20 years? The wise men now say that a fixed ratio is impossible. We reply that the ratio was fixed during the greater part of the last century at nearly 15 to 1, and during the most of this century at 15½ to 1; and can anyone believe that if the four great commercial nations were agreed on the point they would not be able to maintain a fixed ratio now? The reason why France did not prevent trifling fluctuations, say from 15¼ to 15¾ in London, was that France lay between two competing systems—gold on the one hand and silver on the other—at one time vast sums in silver being sent to France, and at another time vast amounts in gold; but had we had a Bi-metallic Union, all this would have been avoided. Some people think that if we were to adopt the bi-metallic system gold would leave this country and disappear. I believe that this is an utter delusion. The four great States that would form the Union hold six hundred millions in gold. Where is the gold to go to? Where is it wanted? No one has been able to guess where it would go to, as there is no place where it is wanted. It is held by nations in whose favour there is a large balance of trade, and there is no possibility of the poorer countries draining away their gold. Indeed it is a thing which cannot be done. I am afraid I am detaining the House too long, and I will therefore draw my remarks as speedily as possible to a close. I would only remind the House that the Royal Commissioners state, unanimously and most decidedly, that it is in the power of a combination of nations to tie together gold and silver. That opinion has been arrived at by men who have thoroughly studied the subject, and some of whom, in the first instance, approached it with a very strong prejudice against it. They were very slow in arriving at this conclusion, and nothing but an exhaustive study of all the facts in connection with this question could have convinced them. We say that the bi-metallic principle is no new thing; on the contrary, it is an old thing. It is a case of *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.* We wish to go back to what has been the rule of Christendom in former ages. We do not look with complacency on brand-new currency schemes; we stand on the system which has existed from the earliest times. As to the ratio, we leave that to the Conference; it is not a question which any nation can deal with alone. We approach the matter with an open mind. For my part, I have no particular desire to go back to the old ratio; nay, I am ready to admit that it would be very difficult to do so, though I cannot forget the prodigious contracts that were made under it prior to 1873—nor, as has already been stated, that four thousand millions of the National Debts of the world were incurred on the old ratio. Moreover, I believe we should be more honest in going back to the old ratio even now than in adopting any other. I should, however, be content with some intermediate ratio; but this is entirely a matter for international agreement. We ought not to bind ourselves to any particular view of the subject, but be prepared to accept whatever ratio the Conference might determine. We are, in fact, only asking the House to vote for the principle of an international arrangement. Besides, whatever decision might be come to by a Conference would be referred for final decision to the various Parliaments concerned. In conclusion, I would say that this question is one which is surrounded with great difficulties; but the end we aim at is one of immense importance not only to this country, but to the world at large, and I feel that its consideration will well repay the time and attention of Parliament. It is a subject that cannot be burked any longer, for it is one of the burning questions of the day; and I trust it will be discussed with impartiality and with a sincere desire for truth, and not be engulfed in the muddy stream of Party politics. Thanking the House for the attention with which it has listened to my remarks, I beg to second the Resolution.

*MR. SPEAKER: I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman who has moved the Resolution that I find some difficulty in putting the whole of the right hon. Gentleman's Motion at the same time, as it contains several different

propositions. I propose, therefore, to put the last paragraph which, as amended, would run as follows—

"That this House is of opinion that the evils due to the monetary changes which occurred upon the Continent, and to the abandonment of the bi-metallic system which had prevailed in certain European countries prior to 1873, can only be effectively dealt with in a Conference for the purpose of considering whether and how far a bi-metallic system can be re-established by international agreement in the interests of all the nations and communities concerned."

*Mr. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham): I have now to move the Amendment which stands on the Paper in my name, and which is—

"Line 3, to leave out all the words after 'That,' in order to insert the words "the Report of the Commission on the effects of the fall in the gold price of silver, and the proposed remedies therefor, is of too inconclusive a character to warrant the Government in taking action upon it."

I have taken up this question with some diffidence, and I should not have moved in the matter if I had not given very close attention to the question for a great number of years and had not had the opportunity of studying it from both the Indian and the Lancashire points of view. The question is one that especially affects the trade of Lancashire and India, and during the last 15 years it has been my lot to speak and write a good deal on the subject of the exchange between the two countries and the effects of the depreciation of silver on the fortunes of the people of India and the people of Lancashire. The right hon. Gentleman who has introduced the Motion to the notice of the House this evening has made a speech of very great ability and earnestness, and I think that nobody who listened to the right hon. Gentleman could fail to understand why it is that he alone amongst the champions of bi-metallism has been able to secure for his theory some amount of popularity in this country. The deputation which the right hon. Gentleman introduced to the Prime Minister and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a most imposing one, and it had such an effect on the minds of those two Ministers that they could only murmur words of deprecation as to the great change which would take place in the currency of the country if the contention of the right hon. Gentleman were successful; in fact, the Prime Minister went so far as to say that he hoped the question would be thoroughly discussed in Parliament. That being so, I think the Government might have allowed more than four hours on a Tuesday evening just before the holidays for this discussion. However, nothing can be better than a free discussion of this question. The monometallists will now be called upon to show what they have to say in defence of their faith, and I have always been a believer in the theory of John Stuart Mill that nobody knows how to defend his own creed until it has been tested by free and thorough discussion. The right hon. Gentleman who has introduced the Motion and the hon. Member for Flintshire have both spoken of the great interests that are involved, and I am sure that when the right hon. Gentleman appeared before the Prime Minister he had gathered together a deputation representing very varied interests indeed. A more strangely assorted team were never put in harness together, and, for my own part, I wonder how long the right hon. Gentleman, with all his skill as a charioteer, will be able to drive them without upsetting the coach, because there is no doubt that the artizan of Lancashire and the great landlord have no permanent interests in common, with reference to his proposal to alter the currency of the country; they must pull in different directions. The right hon. Gentleman holds out to the landlord that he will do away to a certain extent with the competition of bounty-grown Indian wheat; the artizan, on the other hand, is to be freed to some extent from the competition of Indian mills, and he is to get much better value for the goods he sends out to India. But how is the artizan to benefit if he does get better prices for his cotton goods while he has to pay largely-increased prices for his food and for the cotton which he has to work up and manufacture? That is a difficulty which the right hon. Gentleman and his supporters have to face, and for my own part I shall be curious to discover whether the right hon. Gentleman's agitation has any permanent effect on the popular mind. There is no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman has gathered together some leading men in the trade unions of the country, and I had the curiosity to ask one of them

the day after the deputation how it came to pass that many of the working men of Lancashire, apparently, are inclined to follow the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford. The person whom I asked said with the utmost candour, "We know nothing about the subject, but we were told it would benefit our trade, and therefore it would be a good thing to see if something could not be made out of it." That frank admission, in my opinion, represents the state of mind of the people in the great industrial districts of the North who meet together and pass resolutions in favour of bi-metallism The right hon. Gentleman has gone into the historical aspect of the question, into which, however, I will not attempt, at this late hour, to follow him. I will take it for granted that the ratio between gold and silver was maintained up to 1873, and I will assume that the Commissioners have unanimously come to the conclusion that the demonetization of silver on the Continent has been one of the chief causes of the great fall in the prices of commodities which has taken place in all parts of the world. I do not think, however, the contention of the hon. Member for Flintshire can be admitted for one moment that, since 1873, silver-using countries have been uniformly prosperous, while gold-using countries have been passing through a long period of depression. From 1875 to 1880, India certainly did not pass through a period of prosperity; yet, if the theory of bi-metallism be true, those were the very years in which India ought to have been experiencing the greatest benefits from the depreciation of silver, which began in the year 1873. But in those years India was visited by a famine, and there was a considerable export of gold during the five years, whereas since India has had good years there has been a very large importation of gold into that country, amounting, I may say, on the average to £3,000,000 a year. That is an illustration of the danger of attributing commercial changes entirely to the fall in silver. The decline in the prices of commodities is very largely attributable to other causes—to the great advance in the productive powers of the world; to the increased accessibility of markets where there is a sudden demand, through the opening, for instance, of the Suez Canal, which has caused a complete revolution in the trade of the East; to the improvements in the machinery of ships, which have facilitated commerce to a very large extent; to the opening out of immense productive regions in the West and North-West of America; to the influence of the development of the Indian railways, and to the telegraph, which has been brought into very much greater use than before in the transaction of commercial matters. The result is that you no sooner have a demand in a particular market, than you have supplies rushing to it from all parts of the world. Productive power has also been very largely increased during the last eighteen years, because they have been years of perfect peace. Since the Franco-German War there really has been nothing to cause any great destruction or waste of industrial energy and capacity in Europe. All these considerations should cause us to hesitate to rush to the conclusion that the depreciation of silver has been the sole cause of any evils which we may suppose to have arisen from the low prices that now prevail. In my Amendment I propose to ask the House to say that the Report of the Commissioners is of too inconclusive a character to warrant the Government in taking action upon it. The right hon. Gentleman disputed the contention that the Report of the Commissioners is inconclusive. He quoted, from Section 120, words showing that in the opinion of all the Commissioners the adoption of bi-metallism by international agreement is not impracticable. No doubt, Lord Herschell and his colleagues went a very long way, much further than one would have expected, in trying to make things pleasant for the bi-metallists. But however favourably they may have expressed themselves towards what may be called the sentiment of bi-metallism, when it came to any practical proposals they were strong enough in saying that no change in the currency system of this country should be recommended. They followed the siren of bi-metallism to the very brink of a precipice, and then they suddenly pulled up, saying, "Oh! we must not take this tremendous leap in the dark." Their practical advice on the whole subject is given in these words:—

"Under all these circumstances, whilst fully impressed with the difficulties of the present

situation, and more especially with those which affect the Government of India, we are not prepared to recommend that this country should proceed to negotiate with other nations a treaty embodying a bi-metallic arrangement."

That is a very distinct statement on their part, and, when the Commission could come to no other practical conclusion than this, the House and the country would act very rashly indeed if they were not to stand by the currency system which has prevailed in this country for the last 70 years. The central doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman's faith, the foundation on which he has built the immense superstructure of the benefits that are likely to result from any change in the present condition of the currency, is this, that the purchasing power of the rupee in India has not diminished. We can all see plainly enough that the Government of India suffers a good deal from having to remit 22 millions of tens of rupees to this country in payment of £15,000,000. But according to the theory of the bi-metallists, there are very great counter-balancing advantages obtained from the present system by the natives of India. They get a very considerable bounty, it appears, upon the export of all their produce. They are gradually being enriched at the expense of the people of this country. The carriage of all traffic in wheat and seeds and cotton, and so forth, brings money to the Treasury of the Indian Government. The returns of the railways in India are very much larger than they used to be; some of the railways are actually paying 9 per cent on the whole of their capital invested, and the general state of the country is exceedingly prosperous. The right hon. Gentleman talked about the severity of taxation in India; but if the rupee is a depreciated coin, the natives who now only pay their taxation in the depreciated currency are much less heavily taxed than they used to be when the rupee was at its full value. So that there are many compensations to the Indian Government for this heavy charge that it has to pay on account of its remittances to London. The Government of India has also largely benefited by the low rate of interest. The other day the Secretary of State converted the 4 per cent loan into a 3½ per cent loan. And the most recent loan of the Government of India for £7,000,000 at only 3 per cent has been issued at a little over par. I believe that Lord Cross has saved the Government a quarter of a million sterling in interest by the conversion of the debt. And I think that if the Government of India took a little courage, and raised a very large loan, now that capital is so cheap, for the purpose of paying off its silver debt in India, it could borrow 100 millions sterling at something less than 3½ per cent. That is one of the concurrent advantages to be set against the disadvantage of the heavy remittances they have to make to this country. So that all is not loss to the Government of India through what has occurred in the depreciation of silver. Now as to the trade of India. When I first came over to England, some eight years ago, I was strongly impressed with the opinion which then prevailed very generally among Anglo-Indians that no change had taken place in the purchasing power of the rupee. In a period of prosperity of more seasonable years than we had before 1880, the rupee was exchangeable against a much larger quantity of commodities than it had been in the famine years of the previous decade, and it was perfectly natural that I and others, not taking a sufficiently wide view of the circumstances, should be inclined to attribute that result to the fall in silver which had then set in. But subsequent experience and reflection, and especially a study of the evidence given before the Royal Commission on the Currency, have convinced me that this theory of the purchasing power of the rupee being as great as ever in India cannot possibly be maintained. The right hon. Gentleman read us a letter from Lord Dufferin on the subject. Everybody recognises Lord Dufferin as the highest possible authority on the transactions of the Government of India, but I would much prefer the opinion of a few business men engaged in commerce as to conditions of trade in the country. And what do we find to be the opinion expressed by competent business men as to the present purchasing power of the rupee in India? I will quote the opinion of such a man as Mr. Bythell, who has been engaged in the trade of Bombay for the last quarter of a century. Now, Sir, there is an expression of Mr. Bythell's opinion in the report of the

Manchester Chamber of Commerce on the competition between Lancashire and Bombay mills, and he used these words. He says—

"I maintain it is also the fact, that the fall in silver has enhanced prices to the Bombay spinner—that there has been a compensating advantage there. Everything, including wages, is much dearer to the Bombay spinner now than in 1873. The calculation to which I am referring takes no account of this, nor of the fact that, if bi-metallists bring about what they are aiming for—according to their own view—there will be an advance of prices here, and a decline of prices there."

Then, Sir, there is the case of another gentleman who gave evidence before the same Committee, Mr. Cocker, a mill manager, both of Oldham and Bombay. He was speaking of the profit made by mills in Oldham, and he said that the amount of profit reckoned to be made on the capital employed was 10 per cent in Bombay. He was asked, should you consider that good at Oldham? Mr. Cocker laughed, and said—

"My impression is that the China market is secure for Bombay, just because special attention is paid to it. I do not think there is a plant in Lancashire laid out as it ought to be to compete with Bombay in the spinning of 20s. for China. I believe if half the skill, energy, and determination that is shown in Oldham in spinning 32s. and 54s. weft, or in 60s. twist in Bolton, was put into the spinning of 20s.—plant being set out for it—that we should easily turn Bombay out of the China market."

That seems to me to be the gist of the whole matter. Bombay devotes her energies to the spinning of those particular goods for which the Bombay cotton is particularly suited, and, with the natural advantages she possesses in having at her doors the cotton and the market too, she inevitably has a striking superiority over Lancashire in the manufacture of coarser yarns. But to say that the Bombay millowner has an advantage because anyone can buy in Bombay a larger quantity of commodities than he could buy in England for the same amount of money, cost of carriage being of course always excepted, is, I believe, a perfect fallacy. Why, we may take the opinion expressed on this subject by a gentleman who bears a well known name—Mr. Edward Sassoon—one of a firm who have probably the largest dealings with Bombay of any firm in the City of London. He gave evidence before the Royal Commission. The evidence appears in the Appendix. He says—

"I think, myself, that to attribute the development of the export trade of India with the gold-using countries to the fall in silver is altogether a fallacy. The gold prices here respond so quickly to a fall in the value of silver to gold, that anything like a bounty is so short-lived as to be undeserving of consideration."

These are the opinions of business men, and I cannot find any merchants trading with the East who support the contention of the right hon. Gentleman and of the hon. Member for Flintshire, that they are unable to calculate what their trade will be on account of the incessant fluctuations in exchange. Perhaps, however, prices of commodities in India are not an exact guide to the real purchasing power of the rupee, because they may be affected by a thousand different causes. But we will take now the wages of labour in India. Labour, in the main, is a constant quantity, and if you find that wages have gone up, then you may safely come to the conclusion that the purchasing power of the rupee has been affected in India. This morning there has been published a Blue Book giving the result of 30 years' administration in India, and which comes down to the date of February in this year. This is the latest authoritative declaration of the Government of India about the change in the prices of wages and labour in that country. They say that—

"The wages of skilled labour and the amount of skilled labour finding employment have increased considerably, and in some districts, more especially along railway lines, the standard of wages for unskilled labour has advanced. The price of food, however, has risen, though this increase makes little difference to agricultural labourers, who are paid in kind."

Then, in the special Report from Bombay, we have mention of cheaper clothing, higher wages, and evener distribution of wealth among all classes. I will give one more instance of the abandonment by competent Indian authorities of the right hon. Gentleman's favourite idea, that the rupee will buy as much as ever it did in India. In the debate on the East Indian financial statement, the hon. Mr. Steel, a leading Calcutta merchant and a member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council, said:—

"I find that all over the country wages are steadily advancing, much more rapidly than the cost of living."

I think that all these statements serve to show that the purchasing power of

the rupee in regard to commodities and labour has diminished. It is obvious, indeed, that that must be the case. Look into what a network of difficulties the Bi-metallic Commissioners plunged themselves when they attempted to state the opposite conclusion. They say—

"In India, on the other hand, where, in the opinion of nearly all the witnesses whom we have examined, the purchasing power of the rupee continues unimpaired, the prices of commodities measured in silver remain practically the same. We have no evidence to show that silver has undergone any material change in relation to commodities, although it has fallen largely in relation to gold; in other words, the same number of rupees will no longer exchange for the same amount of gold as formerly, but, so far as we can judge, they will purchase as much of any commodity or commodities in India as they did before."

MR. CHAPLIN: Will my hon. Friend permit me to read a little more of this paragraph? He assures us it may be safely said there is evidence of a rise of prices in India; but there is a general agreement among the witnesses we have examined that the purchasing power of the rupee has not fallen. That is signed by all the 12 Commissioners.

*MR. MACLEAN: The right hon. Gentleman is perfectly correct in his quotation of Section 53 in the Report signed by all the Commissioners. Personally, I do not think it is correct to put the matter in the way the Commissioners do, but they do all agree in making this statement—that absolutely the purchasing power of the rupee in India in regard to commodities has not diminished. Still, the monometallists on the Commission carefully refrained from saying that relatively with gold it has not diminished, and that makes all the difference. The right hon. Gentleman does not appreciate the distinction. Let us take an illustration of this matter. The Bi-metallic Commissioners are bold enough to say that the purchasing power of the rupee relatively to gold has maintained itself, and that it is an advantage to have rupees rather than gold in the purchase of commodities in India at the present moment. It is very easy to talk in a general way about such matters; but when the Commissioners descend to particular instances you very soon find them tripping. Now, I find on page 96 of the final Report of the Royal Commission, the following illustration which they themselves offer of this theory—

"For example, cotton goods are sent to India, for which, in order to make a profit, the English exporter must receive a certain sum, say £10,009."

"With the rupee worth 2s. £10,000 is realised by the payment of 100,000 rupees."

"With the rupees at 1s. 6d., £133,333 are required to realise that sum."

"Will the Indian importer 'give this greatly increased price for precisely the same article as he bought before?"

"Obviously not, because prices in India, as we have seen remain the same, and the English manufacturer is in consequence obliged either to take the same silver price as formerly, viz., 100,000 rupees, which means a greatly lowered gold price, viz., £7,500, or not to sell at all; and in either case he undergoes a loss which must be traced directly to the fall in the gold price of silver."

I will take that illustration. A man sends out goods worth £10,000. He sells them, according to the argument, but only gets 100,000 rupees for them. If he exchanges those 100,000 rupees into gold and brings the money back into this country, he only gets £7,500 for his goods, but if he buys commodities with those 100,000 rupees, then, according to the supposition of the Bi-metallic Commission, as laid down on page 95 of the Report in the passage I quoted before the right hon. Gentleman interrupted me, he gets £10,000 worth of commodities. He has, therefore, only to exchange the rupees into commodities and then buy gold with those commodities in order to get £10,000 instead of £7,500, so that, as things that are equal to the same thing are equal to one another, we come to the interesting conclusion, if the right hon. Gentleman's argument be correct, that £7,500 is equal to £10,000. That is the most extraordinary proposition that has ever been offered for public acceptance since Father Tom, in Maginn's famous story, proved to the Pope that black was white. I am amazed that Commissioners of such high standing should sign a Report of this nature. The truth is, that everything in India, although they talk of the rupee being the current coin of the realm, is now actually measured by the gold standard. Gold circulates everywhere in India, and I wish to point out that they import three millions of gold every year. People talk about the trade between England and China being affected to the advantage of the trade between India and China because

the two latter are silver-producing countries. Does not the hon. Gentleman the Member for Flintshire know that in part payment for the Indian goods sent to China a million sterling in gold is imported into Bombay every year from Chinese ports alone? Now, Sir, this is a remarkable thing showing the unsuspected abundance of gold in that part of the world. Everywhere in India gold is exchangeable against silver or other commodities at the actual London value. You can sell a sovereign on any day in the Bombay market for about 15 rupees in silver; and although gold coins may not be current all over India, certainly weight in gold is always exchangeable against silver and other commodities. I say that this idea of the depreciation of silver being found to be an advantage to Indian exports in any way is absolutely unfounded. Now I think I have dealt sufficiently with this matter. I have not attempted to deal with the argument of the hon. Member for Flintshire about fixed charges. That is a very important argument, and in reference to that I will say I do not think that he attributes sufficient weight to the very great advantage which has been derived from the cheapness of capital and abundance of credit in this country. He talks about the burden of local taxation being much heavier than it used to be. Why, we recently witnessed the conversion of the National Debt at a lower rate of interest, and cannot our municipalities also borrow money on a lower rate of interest than they used to, and cannot the solvent landlord or the solvent borrowers get capital on easier terms? Are not all these benefits to borrowers of money the result of the fall in prices which the hon. Member deplores, and have they not proved great advantages? I will pass by that, however, because it is time for me to conclude my observations. There is one matter with which I wish to deal, and that is the question of the ratio between gold and silver. We know that the essence of bi-metallism is this—that according to the bi-metallists it is possible to fix a ratio between gold and silver, which can be steadfastly maintained from year to year. If the bi-metallists had had the courage to say what the ratio should be, I should not have had so much fault to find with their report on account of its inconclusive character, because then there would have been something for the country to go upon. But they shirked the very substance of the whole controversy, for, unless we know what the fixed ratio is to be, there is absolutely no substance in their imaginations. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division, no doubt, wants to go back to the ratio of 15½ to one. He told us the other night, in the debate on Indian pensions, that, if we adopted bi-metallism, the Indian Government would save six or seven millions a year, but it cannot do that unless we have a ratio of 15½ to one. Now the hon. Member for Whitechapel is the one bi-metallist on the Royal Commission, I believe, who stated what he thought should be the ratio between gold and silver, and he put it at 20 to one. What, I should like to know, in that case, would be the relief to these people suffering from the tremendous burden of fixed charges; what relief would be given to the Government of India, and who would be benefited by a change of that kind? Directly I saw that the Bi-metallic Commissioners did not attempt to fix the ratio, but had actually said in their Report that it was a matter of detail, I came to the conclusion that there was nothing whatever in this agitation that was worth talking about any longer. One of the deputation who went up to the Prime Minister used a very pretty figure of speech. He said: "We do not wish to dethrone King Gold; we only wish to restore Queen Silver to her conjugal rights." But when two people have been separated for 16 or 17 years and the estrangement has been growing deeper and deeper all that time, would it not be rather a rash proceeding to join them together in the bonds of holy matrimony once more, without even an attempt to fix the terms on which they should come together again? Yet that is the exact position of the bi-metallists at the present moment. The proposal of the right hon. gentleman really amounts to this—That we should go to foreign nations and ask them to settle for us what the price of silver shall be. I, for one, think that we have had pretty nearly enough of International Conventions to regulate the commerce of this country. We had a

Convention which was to fix the price of sugar. Are we to have another International Convention which is to raise the price of silver, and of all the commodities we purchase from silver-using countries, by any amount from 10 to 50 per cent? What advantage could that possibly be to this country, which does not produce practically one ounce of silver? We have no store of silver in England. There are hundreds of millions' worth of silver coin and bullion in France and India. There is untold wealth of silver in the treasuries and the mines of America, and why should we go to these countries, which have silver of their own, and ask them to be good enough to allow us to put an artificial bounty of 30 per cent on this great mass of wealth which they possess—a bounty which will have to be paid, after all, by the British consumer? I think that is really a proposition which only requires to be stated in order that the people may thoroughly understand what bi-metallists are anxious to lead us into. The hon. Member for Flintshire referred to free ports. Well, Sir, I am in favour of free ports, and I agree that one cause of the advance of trade with silver-using countries is that they do not put such high tariffs on our trade as other countries do. But I would say that we want freedom in everything in connection with commerce. For the last 70 years we have had a system of currency which has been good enough for us. Under it we have prospered amazingly. We have had our ups and downs, but trade is now reviving and we are now enjoying a state of prosperity which probably no country ever possessed before. Why should we imperil this by submitting ourselves to engagements with foreign nations which would have the effect of raising seriously the price of food and of the raw materials of all our industries?

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out all the words after the word 'That,' in order to insert the words 'the Report of the Commission on the effects of the fall in the gold price of silver, and the proposed remedies therefor, is of too inconclusive a character to warrant the Government in taking action upon it.—(*Mr. James Maclean.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*Sir JOSEPH PEASE (Barnard Castle): I believe it may be for the convenience of the House if I now second the Amendment which has been moved by the hon. Member for Oldham, instead of taking the course of going back to the Amendment which I myself had placed upon the Paper at the time when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire put down his Motion. At this hour I will not detain the House at the length I had intended to had I been able to take the place which I originally hoped to obtain. I have looked at the question so far as I can, with a view to collating and collecting those facts and figures that bear upon it. Now, Sir, the main question which my right hon. Friend places before us is that we are a monometallic nation, and he says that because we are so, we have not done so well for ourselves and our people as we should have done had we had a bimetallic standard. This raises the questions at once. Have we not been fairly prosperous? Could we have done much better than we have been doing? And what are the signs and figures which induce the right hon. Gentleman to suppose that the country has been going to the bad under the present system of finance? It is all very well to say that there is a scarcity of gold. I am one of those who doubt that, but if gold is appreciated then the things which gold buy are depreciated. At the present moment it is difficult to draw the precise line between appreciation and depreciation as affected by the supply of the precious metals and the supply of goods in the market. I have looked carefully into this question, and I have come to the conclusion that it is, in our case, too often the largeness of the supply of goods on the market that affects the prices and brings about the depreciation. I must say I think the right hon. Gentleman took a very erroneous standard when he fixed upon the prices of the year 1873, because that was the year of a higher inflation of prices than we had ever known before and we have ever seen since. His plan in adopting that year as his standard, reminded me very much of a story told of an old neighbour of mine in Yorkshire, who was coming home from market during the time of the war, and having sold his oats at six shilling per bushel, said he thought the

prices were fair as between man and man—so it is with my hon. Friend in promulgating the theory that 1873, the year of the great inflation in prices, is to be the standard of comparison because the high prices then arrived at were fair between man and man. Because 1873 was a year of inflation of prices, it seems to be thought that we must by some means endeavour to get back to them. What is the state of the country at the present moment? In the following figures I have taken 1871, two years before the prices of 1873, and the alteration in the French standard to a gold one, and I have compared them with the figures produced for 1887 or 1888, the latest which we have officially supplied to us. Now what do I find? Our population increased between 1871 and 1888, accordingly to the Poor Law returns in England and Wales, from 22,788,000 to 28,628,000. Our indoor and outdoor paupers in 1871 numbered 1,000,000. In 1873 they had fallen to 887,000; in 1888 there was another fall to 825,000, and in 1889 there was a further decrease to 817,000. Therefore although the population increased one-fourth, pauperism has gone down one-fourth, as compared with 1871. Then we come to that useful institution, the Savings Bank. Taking the Post Office Savings Bank we find that the amount invested in 1871 was £15,000,000. In 1887 it was £49,000,000; while in the Trustee Savings Banks in 1871 the amount of capital invested was £32,000,000, and in 1887 it was £36,000,000. Again, the investments of capital in railways in the United Kingdom in 1871 amounted to £552,000,000, and in 1887 it was £845,000,000, an increase of nearly £300,000,000 of the savings of the country invested in railway companies in the United Kingdom. Then we come to the Income Tax returns. Here again we find an increase of £41,000,000 under Schedule A, which includes lands, tenements, &c., and under Schedule D, which comprises profits in trade, &c., the increase in 1887 is £57,000,000; under Schedule B, occupation, &c., the increase between 1871 and 1887 is £3,400,000, and the total annual value of property and profits assessed to Income Tax in the United Kingdom has risen £116,000,000 between 1871 and 1887. These figures, at any rate, do not show that the country has been growing worse under the present financial system. On the contrary they show growing incomes, growing savings, and growing wealth. Again the figures show that in the production of silver during recent years, there has been a very marked increase, and according to tables which have been published during the years 1881 and 1885, the annual average has been £21,000,000 sterling, as compared with an annual average of £11,900,000 in the five years ending 1870, so that according to these figures we have produced in those five years nearly £50,000,000 more silver than we produced in the five years ending in 1870. No wonder, then, that the Commissioners say in their Report—

"That the fall in the gold price of silver is mainly due to the depreciation of silver."

They go on to say—

"The above are reasons for thinking that the greater part of the fall in the gold value of silver has been due to causes affecting silver rather than to causes affecting gold; and this conclusion fortifies and is fortified by the conclusion to which we have already come to, that the fall in the gold price of commodities is in the greater part due to causes which affect these commodities rather than to causes which affect gold."

The right hon. Gentleman approached very boldly the question of what is to be the relative value of silver and gold, but when he came straight up to that difficult fence he turned round and left the point to be settled by the Commissioners or the representatives of the foreign countries proposed to be assembled. My hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire took the same course. The crux of the whole position rests in that what are to be the relative legal values of the two metals. In the Paper which he read before the Statistical Society, Mr. Giffen very truly said, "it would be impossible by law to control the effect of the decreasing value of silver as compared with gold." Mr. Giffen also gave a table which is so entirely contrary to what has been stated by the mover and seconder of the Resolution that I must trouble the House by referring to it for a moment. He says the ratio of silver to gold has been steadily on the decline from the year 15·1 to the present moment. From 1501 to 1520 it was 10·75 to 1; in 1661 to

1680 it was 15·00 to 1; in 1800 it was 15·50 to 1; and at the present time it is 22·00 to 1. No wonder, Mr. Giffen says, it would be impossible by any legislation to keep up a standard of value as compared with gold when the whole history of the silver value is against such a theory. Although the supply of gold may have fallen shorter than at one time there has been a very large annual supply. Dr. Soetbeer estimates that the value of gold in the National Treasuries and principal banks of the world was in 1882, £203,500,000; in 1883 £230,000,000; in 1884 £234,000,000, and in 1885 £252,000,000. Judging from the Returns there has been no fear on the part of the Directors of the Bank of England of gold running away from them. In recent years the rate of discount has been especially steady. Again more money is now paid in cheques and drafts and orders than was paid 20 years ago. Then I think my right hon. Friend (Mr. Chaplin) has forgotten what a very large factor silver is in our every-day transaction. I find that in the railway world about one-fourth of the whole wages paid is paid in silver. In the textile fabric trade I find that 50 per cent of the wages is paid in silver, and in the coal and iron trades from 16 to 20 per cent is paid in silver. But what I want more especially to point out is that there is a great fallacy in the argument as to the Manchester trade, and the Indian corn trade. It is assumed that each transaction is a separate transaction. That is not so. It is the balance of the aggregate of transactions that influences exchange, and the remittances of balances in bullion. One word or two as to the Lancashire trade about which so much has been said. I see that the cotton goods and yarns sent from Lancashire to India were of the value of £14,825,000 in 1871, while the raw cotton imported from India was of the value of £11,732,000. Lancashire, therefore, had only to draw from India about £3,000,000. In 1873 the £14,000,000 had risen to £17,000,000, while the imports of raw cotton had decreased from £11,000,000 to £9,000,000. Instead, therefore, of being £3,000,000 to draw from India, Lancashire had in 1873 to draw £7,000,000. In 1887, the exports of cottons and yarns to India had, in spite of all we have heard about the Lancashire trade, risen from £14,825,000 in 1871 to £20,991,922, while the imports of raw cotton had decreased to £4,815,647. The balance against India for Lancashire alone, therefore, was £16,176,275, in the place of £3,000,000 of 1871. The balance of our trade with India is very steadily increasing under the present mode of dealing. England now sends about £13,000,000 worth more goods to India—£33,000,000 instead of £20,000,000 worth — than she did 15 years ago. At the same time, instead of money coming back from India we are always sending money to India. I come to the following conclusions, and I am sorry that time does not allow me to give my reasons at greater length. That this country has prospered under a monometallic system; that the supply of silver has been enormous and has thus depreciated its value; that there has been no scarcity of gold; that these metals are not so much required in commerce as heretofore; that the supply of the standard articles on the market has been in excess of the demand; that in addition to the enormous imports of agricultural produce the state of freights has contributed to an abnormal condition of prices. I find that last year's Return shows a loss on the main articles of agricultural produce as compared with 1873, of £9,000,000 on the quantity of beef produced at home, £12,000,000 on the quantity of mutton, and £20,000,000 on the quantity of wheat. These figures represent £1 5s. of less net profit per acre on the whole acreage in the agricultural returns. The quantity of iron produced in the world in 1871 was 12,000,000 tons, in 1873, 13,000,000 tons, in 1887 it was 21,000,000 tons; the total quantity of coal produced in the United Kingdom in 1873 was 127,000,000 tons, while in 1887 it was 162,000,000 tons; and so, independently entirely of the question of the value of the precious metals, there has been put upon every one of these markets a vast increase above the quantity in them in 1873. More than that, we overdid our shipbuilding to a very large extent, so that the freights became exceedingly low, and agricultural produce was brought into this country at abnormally low prices. It appears to

me that it would be perfect madness in the present state of things to embark in any such changes as those proposed, and I think that if 12 of the cleverest men in the country cannot agree upon the question we ought not to call in our neighbours to tell us what to do. I beg to second the Amendment.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not propose at this late hour (12.45) to detain the House more than a very few minutes. Whether hon. Members agree with my right hon. Friend or not, I think we must all admit that the House is greatly indebted to the right hon. Member for Lincolnshire for the exceedingly lucid and able statement he has made. No Member can fail to acknowledge that it was one of the most able statements of a most intricate and difficult question ever presented to this House, in which every argument was stated with absolute fairness. The question is one of such very great importance that it is exceedingly desirable that it should be stated fully, fairly, and completely from every point of view. The view of the Government was explained the other day by the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I am bound to say for myself I could not embark rashly on such a matter without the most complete evidence that the changes proposed are received by the country as embodying in themselves conditions of absolute security for the vast transactions in which we are engaged. If there is one thing more necessary for the maintenance of the commercial fabric than another, it is a sense of security in the investments of capital and labour. Any Government that was a party to a scheme which would shake the confidence of the commercial classes in the currency would be inflicting a very serious injury on the national prosperity. With reference to the proposition that has been put forward that Government should pay off their debts otherwise than in gold, let me point out that in these cases the contract which exists between the debtor and the creditor can only be liquidated in gold, and that if the proposition were assented to the debtor would be paying back to the creditor something which was not as valuable as gold. That idea would startle very seriously all commercial classes throughout the world, for it is essential in order to insure the continuance of prosperity and the success of commercial undertakings that every contract shall be faithfully fulfilled. I must say that I am not myself satisfied with the arguments in favour of the Motion, and I believe that my right hon. Friend does not ask or desire that change which he advocates should at once take effect. I think that all who are interested in the industries of this country, all those who are prepared to borrow money, and those who are prepared to lend money, should accept the change before we attempt to make any change in the present system. I believe that if we act hastily in this matter we may go far to transfer our trade to other countries, and, if not to destroy, at all events, to impede our present prosperity. It would seem, too, that the arguments of the Mover and Seconder of this Motion do not always agree; for my right hon. Friend the Member for Lincolnshire argued that the depreciation of silver inflicted a great loss annually upon India, and therefore was a great burden on the people of India; but the hon. Gentleman the Member for Flintshire pointed out that it was a great grievance to England, and especially to Lancashire, and that the depreciation of the rupee enabled the Indian cotton-spinners to increase the manufacturing power of that country. These arguments show how greatly involved this question is, and until, at all events, we come to an agreement among ourselves, until the commercial classes of this country come to an agreement among themselves, no Government could be rash enough to deal with this question. I only mention these things to justify us in the course we are taking when we say that we cannot undertake what we are asked to do; that we cannot accept a change which, I believe, is not proved to be necessary or advantageous to the country, and that, however right and sound in theory its principles may be, they must first of all be accepted by the people at large and be held to be safe and sound and true by the commercial classes, before we venture to accept them. I acknowledge all that my right hon. Friend has said as to the importance of the question; I admit the great dislocation of trade and the great distress, but I venture to think that

still greater dislocation and distress would result on the adoption of a change which is not proved to be necessary or accepted generally by the people.

Mr. W. SINCLAIR (Falkirk): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Qestion proposed, "That this debate be now adjourned."

Mr. CHAPLIN: It is evident it is necessary that this question should be more fully debated than has been possible to-night, and therefore I have no objection to the adjournment of the debate. I hope, however, that it will be in the power of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House to give us a day on which the question can be fully discussed.

Question put and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till Tuesday, 18th June.

MOTION.

TITHE RENT CHARGE RECOVERY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Secretary Matthews, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Recovery of Tithe Rent Charge, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Attorney General, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 272.]

TELEGRAPHS (ISLE OF MAN) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Raikes, Bill to amend the Telegraph Acts, 1863 to 1885, and the Post Office Acts in relation to the Isle of Man, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Raikes and Mr. Jackson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 273.]

COUNTY COUNCILLORS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL. (No. 204.)

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to move the Second Reading of this Bill.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston): I could hardly believe that any hon. Member would propose to read a Bill of this nature without giving the House an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it. It is quite certain——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

It being One of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till 17th June.

And Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at One o'clock till Monday 17th June.

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VOLUME CCCXXXVI.

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